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The Society of Saint Francis

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Minister General : Brother Geoffrey S.S.F.

THE FIRST ORDER OF THE S.S.F. EUROPEAN PROVINCE

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Pax et bonum.

THE FRANCISCAN

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No. 1

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Pilgrims of Saint Francis

NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE to St. Albans, Hertfordshire from Tuesday, 24 to Tuesday, 31 August, 1982. Cost £30 adults (good reductions for full-time students, pensioners, unemployed and children under 12 years).

INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER in Northern France (Lille) from Saturday, 29 to Monday, 31 May, 1982 (Pentecost).

INTERNATIONAL PILGRIMAGE in Spain (Leon) from Monday, 2 to Thursday, 12 August, 1982.

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MISSIONERS AT BEACONSFIELD CONSIDER THEIR PROGRAMME

From left: Samuel, Bernard, Nan and Angelo.



Mission



MISSION is central to Christianity, because it is a religion of the universal love of God made known in Christ. The message of Jesus is therefore addressed to all mankind. The Church, to be true to its calling, can never rest from seeking to make this message known.

It is a matter of special concern to followers of Saint Francis, whose vocation included preaching the love of God under a strong sense of inner compulsion. Mission work is therefore an important element in S.S.F., whether it be traditional parish missions in the United Kingdom, America, Australia or New Zealand, or preaching safaris in Tanzania or the Pacific Islands.

New thinking on mission tends to put the accent on partnership and mutual benefit. There is an interaction of giving and receiving. This has been expressed in the Partners in Mission enterprise, which has been going on throughout the Anglican Communion, reaching England rather belatedly, and administering to it some healthy shocks.

Mission and ministry are not really separable. Ministry to the poor and the helpless, the sick and the dying, is a practical demonstration of the love of God. It fails if it does not lead to the formation of relationship with those who are at the receiving end. But where this happens, there is an enhancing of the worth of the person, and this affects the giver as much as it does the receiver. Through this interaction the love of God is experienced mutually, even if it is not spoken in words. Mission, on the other hand, puts this into words. But it is just as much a matter of making of relationships, and so also of mutual enrichment.

But the really dreadful thing, which readers will find mentioned in more than one of the articles printed in this issue, is that Anglicans—at any rate *English* Anglicans—have such great difficulty in speaking naturally and easily about God and Jesus. There is a kind of inhibition, and it affects the clergy as well as the laity, not to mention friars and sisters. All of us need to look to ourselves, and try to see why this is so. It may well be that we have forgotten how to be grateful to God. We have to know in our hearts the universal love of God and be filled with gratitude, if we are to give the message of Christ to today's torn world.

The Minister General's Letter

My dear friends,

October 1981—October 1982 is being kept by all Franciscans as the International Year of S. Francis commemorating the 800th anniversary of his birth. During this year we are all being asked to concentrate on a three-fold concern.

1. To celebrate the dignity of human life by emphasising Christian love in the Franciscan family; respect for life at all stages of life; developing attitudes towards people which avoid any form of discrimination; and by exploring the arts, sciences, culture and scholarship for uplifting the human spirit.
2. To lead the people to rejoice in the gifts of creation through justice in the Franciscan family; just distribution and use of the goods of creation among peoples and nations; through conservation and ecology; through concern about affluence, consumerism and inequitable economic systems.
3. To proclaim the good news of Christ by Gospel life within the Franciscan family; by reaching the unchurched; by expanding our ecumenical visions; by being instruments of peace and reconciliation; and by broadening the use of communications for evangelism.

These are truly Christian aims in the spirit of the Gospel and of S. Francis, and I hope we can each of us join with our brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic Church and give ourselves to the furtherance of these aims. But over all of us, and particularly in Europe at this present time, hangs the black cloud of threatened nuclear war. In a number of the great cities of Europe there have been massive demonstrations against nuclear armaments and the stationing of nuclear weapons in Europe. Facing them in Russia and Eastern Europe is the greatest mass of destructive weapons ever assembled. In celebrating the dignity of human life and rejoicing in the gifts of creation we must first make peace and ensure that men, women and children are not going to be destroyed, or to suffer a fate worse than death by continuing to exist crippled and maimed, and that this wonderful world is not going to be devastated and polluted for generations by the insane lusts of wicked people. To drift into nuclear war would be the great blasphemy against God and his creation, and we, ordinary men and women, must see that it does not happen, for the future is in our hands.

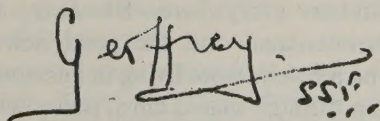
Perhaps the greatest wickedness that is being perpetrated at the present time is to play with the idea that we can still have a nuclear war without being totally destroyed. We can have a small-scale nuclear war that would not involve America and Russia very much and out of it they would emerge largely unscathed. But, of course, Europe would be destroyed. Thomas Merton, in his book *Breakthrough to Peace*, likens the human race to an alcoholic who knows that drink will destroy him, yet always has 'good reasons' why he must continue drinking. The human race has a fatal fascination for war and self-destruction. We are only going to stop this drift to war by a massive affirmation of the three aims I have quoted at the beginning of this letter, by getting life right again, by seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness above everything else.

Ways must be found to reduce armaments among the great powers and even among the smaller powers. How is this to happen? Some advocate unilateral disarmament. But some of us remember how the disarmament of Britain in the 1930s made it impossible to control Hitler's ambitions and tempted him to launch on a policy of world domination because the allies, as he thought, were weak and unready. He came within an ace of achieving his ambition. In the long term the nations of the world have to realise that there are other ways of settling their differences than through war, and that the United Nations has an increasingly responsible part to play in this.

But wars erupt not only because of external problems, but because of internal injustice, economic instability and large scale unemployment which creates frustration and despair from which war is born. So as we point to the dignity of human life we must help those who are unemployed to find a meaningful and fulfilled life. Full employment in the old sense will not return. The Churches, and Religious Communities in particular, need to be helping all people, and especially the younger generation, to creative living and to a new set of values in life.

So let this be a year of celebration, but not only in splendid gatherings for worship or pilgrimages to Assisi, but in the strength of the Lord to fulfil the three aims of the International Year of S. Francis.

Pax et Bonum,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey', followed by a horizontal line and the initials 'ssr'.

Minister General.

Chronicle

Brother Anselm writes:

EUROPEAN PROVINCE Peace is increasingly the preoccupation of the public mind. People everywhere experience a growing awareness that peace is under threat—and they react in ways which cannot be overlooked by those whose responsibility it is to govern, and to preserve peace. For many, this concern is a selfish one. What is threatened is their own safety and survival—not many of us demonstrated publicly in order to promote peace in Vietnam, in Campucia, in Biafra, in Somalia, in Korea, in Chile, in El Salvador. These are just a few of the many places which have been or are being raped by the forces of violence and evil at work in the world during our thirty-five years of ‘peace’ since the Second World War.

If by peace, all we mean is deliverance from the nuclear holocaust, so that we in the West can be free to continue our well-fed existence at the expense of starving populations somewhere out there, that is an object for which Christians cannot pray or work. Peace *must* mean peace for humanity, and the roots of conflict are not the existence of armaments (nuclear or otherwise) for these are simply tools. The roots of conflict are the existence of grounds for anger, resentment, frustration—and these are the flagrant injustices which are perpetuated by the rich nations in their unwillingness to part with material wealth.

Christians have a clear obligation to work for and to proclaim peace. This witness is not the preserve of the eccentric few, because peace is at the heart of the gospel, it is its essence. But the pursuit of true peace is itself going to result in conflict—conflict between those with a selfish vision of peace, and those who believe that peace must mean a better life (materially) for the deprived peoples *and* a decline in standards for the privileged.

The Christian, therefore, who wants to press publicly for peace cannot simply add a voice to C.N.D. If he is to be the voice, the limbs, the heart of Jesus in the world, then his words and deeds and loving have all to be expressions of the gospel of Jesus. This gospel is for God’s children everywhere—Russians, Jews, Arabs, Pakistanis, yes and Surbitonians—and the good news is news of peace—inward peace which results from living in harmony with our nature, peace in relationship through shared aims, peace between groups and nations, faiths and ideologies, in the realisation of the wealth of human diversity.

But we cannot begin with lofty abstractions. Where there is no bread, there is no peace. In the wake of 'The Gospel Now' conference, in this Saint Francis Year, certainly we must pray, we must be alert to the world. We must also follow the advice of the Letter of James (paraphrased) 'Don't just sit there, DO SOMETHING'.

What to do is only made clear to those who give themselves unreservedly to God our Father, in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit guides and strengthens them, *they* know what to do. Please pray for those whose activities you will read about in the following pages, that those activities with all the energies of our Christian living, will tend towards the promotion of the peace of God—the peace which, being a reflection of his nature, is beyond our power of intellectual understanding—and yet which we believe with our whole will to be the only condition for human well-being and joy.

Brother Bernard writes:

HILFIELD 1982 Dates: Summer Festival (at Wells Cathedral 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.) 10 July. Families Camp (write to Canon Norman Hill, The Vicarage, Crowhurst, Limpsfield, Surrey) 30 July to 9 August. Youth Camp (write to Brother Philip Bartholomew here; it is designed for those aged fifteen and over) 13 to 23 August. Stigmata Festival (special for the 800th year of S. Francis) 18 September.

800th Year. Further details of all these events will be in the May FRANCISCAN. We are hoping that the Wells Festival will be a great occasion for the West Country and the Midlands. We have called it 'Celebrating Community' and are hoping that Jean Vanier, the author of *Community and Growth*, will be the speaker, and that all sorts of 'alternative communities' will come and share, as well as Anglican and Roman Catholic 'religious communities'. There will be music from the Fisherfolk and drama from Lee Abbey and exhibitions from many groups. There will be an Anglican Eucharist, an ecumenical Open Air service, Cathedral Evensong, workshops on various subjects, including prayer, unemployment, marriage enrichment. Please book the date now (and a coach for your parish) and look out for more details. The Hilfield Summer Festival and the Compton Durville Festival are combining for this event and sharing in the celebrations of 800 years of the present Wells Cathedral in the 800th year of the birth of S. Francis. Incidentally, the Winchester Tertiaries and their Roman Catholic counterparts are combining on Saturday, 24 April for a Celebration in Romsey Abbey at noon which we plan to support from here as part of the Year. We hope that the Bishop-elect of Salisbury, Canon John Austin Baker will celebrate and preach here on 18 September, the Stigmata Festival; the afternoon speaker will be announced.

Comings and Goings. Richard arrived back from Glasshampton just as Bill Lash was leaving for eighteen months in Brisbane. With characteristic obedience, and even something of a schoolboy's excitement, Bishop Bill set out; we hope that he will enjoy his time at Brookfield and that his contribution there will be greatly

valued. Samuel also goes to Brisbane on the way to the Solomons for three months at the end of November, before returning to be Novice Guardian. We are grateful that Ramon is coming to help here for three months in December and that his profession will be at 8.30 a.m. on Saturday 19 December at the end of the Community Retreat, which is to be conducted by Father David Campbell, the Superior General of S.S.J.E. In the New Year we are looking forward to welcoming Christopher to live in Bernard House. He is no stranger to this house, coming over from Hooke most weeks: it will be a real strength to have him with us. Gregory's helping-out stay was hugely appreciated on every side and we were sorry to see him return to Glasshampton. We also miss John Mark who has moved to the Canterbury House.

Pyro-technics. Martin Sharpe excelled himself on Guy Fawkes night, and, apart from the odd Catherine Wheel which ran amok, it was a very professional show, helped by a generous gift from our friends the Wells from Battersea, here on an unexpected, but very happy visit. Much more (horrifically!) expensive has been the protection of S. Francis House from fire risk, by complete re-wiring and smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire doors. It is much to Samuel's credit that the results actually improve the appearance as well as the safety of the house and make it more homely. Raymond Christian is moving in there soon. Nathanael's father, George Thompson, has had a wonderful new lease of life after only a week in Dorchester Hospital and Alex Templeton, our next oldest resident, is also a bit better.

Witness. The summer programme of camps and conferences went well, as did the Summer Festival to which large crowds came. We nearly lost the marquee in a terrible storm, but no one was hurt and not all the canvas was ripped up. It was a home-team effort this year: many commented on Angelo's acute and powerful sermon and said how glad they had been to hear more about the Gospel Now Conference. Incidentally, we have plenty of posters and brochures (25p plus postage) about that and the last issue of THE FRANCISCAN with full reports. We believe that they are all valuable witnesses which our friends could pass on to others. In early October, Angelo, Samuel and Bernard went off to a big mission (five-in-one) at Beaconsfield, which was greatly blessed. Before they went and since, we have begun a searching look at our life here in the light of the Gospel. We have so much on all the time that we don't make time for each other; it is as easy here, as anywhere else, to be too busy, or to use busyness to cover other things. We are going to try and improve on this by a new common room more central in the Friary, a community day from time-to-time and a special community week after Easter. Of course, common life and Gospel living depend on more interior conversion. This Friary has so long been a Gospel sign to people that we have to give attention to the quality of experience behind it.

Sickness. Gordon has to face another operation, this time for hiatus-hernia, but he is in good heart about it and we expect that by the next FRANCISCAN he will be fully recovered. Jeremy Johns, a postulant, has also had a time in hospital.

New Blood. Chris Taylor, Stephen Fisher, Paul King and Ralph Thorpe have joined us as postulants since the last FRANCISCAN and Raymond Christian has been clothed as a novice. We look forward to welcoming further postulants in the spring and ask our readers' prayers for the continual growth of our Society.

Training. The Novice Conference was a happy, sunny time at Hooke; a novice project on the vows took five of us to Post Green and Stapehill (Trappistine Sisters),

together with six from Compton Durville—we are most grateful to our tertiaries Tony and Sally Carter for their help; some novices are about to go to Portland Borstal for the weekend; the regular lectures and the tutorial programme continue. Training in prayer has been welcomed by those who have come to the autumn programme on Saturdays and Bernard has been leading seminars on spirituality in Dorchester on Wednesdays. Colin Wilfred is a great help in the novice training at Hilfield; he has been on pilgrimage in Somerset and planning pilgrimages in Brussels and is at present on mission at Cardiff University. Brian Thomas continues the quite demanding training for the ordained ministry.

Broadcasts. We all enjoyed the BBC's visit to us for the Sunday morning Radio Two Nic Page programme on the day the clocks went back and are grateful to Chris Rees, the Producer, and his team. We have had many letters since. We also did a little piece for Schools Broadcasts, again as part of the 800th year of S. Francis. We have a Gospel to proclaim.

Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, Patron of the National CAMBRIDGE Society for Cancer Relief, recently opened Arthur Rank House, a new Continuing Care Unit (Hospice). The J. Arthur Rank Group Charities made a very generous donation to the project, a donation matched by the Cambridge Cancer Relief Appeal.

Her Royal Highness visited each patient, and members of the Cambridge Area Health Authority, and the staff, were presented to her. Brother Edgar is the Chaplain.

William Henry has been part of the community here for the last eight months, and will be much missed now that he has gone to work in Belfast. However fair's fair, and Paschal has come to replace him.

Brother Victor writes:

PLAISTOW The house was markedly quieter last year. Not that the brothers have given up work, simply that there are fewer of us here, and the majority of our involvements take us away from the house. One happy result of having extra space is that for the first time in quite a few years we have been able to welcome a couple of people to stay for a few months. They are making a good contribution to our life and we are pleased to be able to offer this facility again.

Brother Victor John has been working in a local church since the beginning of 1980. The job to be done there was exceedingly demanding, and Victor John has been tackling it with his customary energy. He felt increasingly that in order to do justice to the task that our Society had committed him to, it was necessary for him to live nearer the church. The Friary is about a mile away. Consequently he is now on leave of absence and living in a terraced house about three minutes walk from S. Martin's Church. While his work load has not decreased he is certainly more available to those for whom he ministers. Brother Julian has been giving him some support.

Brother Aidan seems to be flourishing in his work with the Missions to Seamen in South Korea. A very different assignment to Dar es Salaam as there are no club facilities there, and so he works in with the Roman Catholic seamen's mission. He should be leaving South Korea about the time you read this, but at the time of writing we do not know where his next posting will be.

A few of us were involved in the Peace March to Hyde Park last October. It was a tremendous experience to be with such a huge and very good-natured crowd. What most impressed us was the great cross-section of people represented, which suggested that the peace movement at last had a truly popular base in this country, and indeed throughout Europe.

It seems that all three London houses are involved with the Pilgrimage of Reconciliation called by the Taizé Community and converging on London immediately after Christmas. They estimate that fifteen thousand people will take part in it, and it is being organised both centrally and in one hundred and fifty local centres. This is a great act of faith, which, when you read this, will be all over bar picking up the pieces!

Tristram, as chairman of the Committee on Liturgy, is very pleased with the new edition of *The Daily Office—S.S.F.*, which is now available, and anyone interested should get in touch with him.

Life in this house of the Community can never be said to be
TOYNBEE HALL monotonous or dull; our diaries are always full. Since we last wrote Tshiamala has appeared and disappeared again, first to a U.S.P.G. conference in Winchester, and then to Europe for a holiday and another conference. From September he has been a settled member of the household, and an extremely busy one, as he spends long hours in College, studying very hard indeed.

The major event for the family, during the last four months, has been the transformation of Peter William into Simon Peter. He made his profession in the church of S. George-in-the-East, on 15 August. The church was full and among those present it was good to see representatives from the many aspects of our life in Toynbee and East London—residents and staff from Toynbee, members of the congregation, priest friends, staff from Sunley House, where Peter works—as well as many friends from varying stages of his life, and of course a healthy sprinkling of brown. The service was followed by a buffet meal in Toynbee, arranged by the Warden, and in the evening the residents put on a disco. The day was reported to be a great and happy occasion by all who shared in it.

Unfortunately Leonore was unable to participate fully as she had had her second hip replacement operation on the previous day, necessitating two weeks in hospital and a further month away to recuperate. However Simon Peter, accompanied by Mother Elizabeth and Hannah, brought her Communion in the afternoon, thus linking her too with this special day in the life of the Toynbee family.

As a help to fill the gaps left by Tshiamala's and Leonore's absences, Jeanette came and spent three weeks with the group, learning her way around the area and making her first trips on the underground. It is good to have these visits from those in other houses as they help to knit us closer into the wider S.S.F. fellowship.

Through the summer we helped with the Children's Country Holiday Fund project, for the Stepney area, which is organised from Toynbee. First there were visits to the homes of prospective holiday-makers, then a share in a good deal of office work. Leonore did the medical examinations for each group, the day before

it left for holiday, and Hannah helped take parties to the different London termini and later to collect them, when each holiday period was over.

Since our last bulletin, Hannah is well and truly involved in the work of S. Botolph's crypt. At first it was slow, as the completion of the rejuvenation of the crypt was delayed, but gradually the tempo rose as first part and then the whole crypt was in use. She came back to report teething troubles—lice in the washing machine; a blocked drain, causing flooding! Later we heard of two hundred folk attending, with the making of endless cups of tea. The last part to get under way has been the day centre, with its attempt to offer a programme of more complete rehabilitation to those who hold out a hand for it.

A recent event, in which we all participated, was Nora Neal's eightieth birthday celebrations, which coincided with S. Botolph's Harvest Festival. The service was followed by a harvest lunch which, for Nora, almost turned into a 'This is your life' programme, as one and another with whom she had worked in the past appeared. They came from London, Eastbourne, Essex, Swindon, and each was a fresh surprise to Nora. She had got wind that something was on but never suspected the extent of the planning. It was very good to share in the celebrations and to give thanks for the life of one of our Tertiaries, spent so continuously in the service of others.

At present Peter and Hannah are very involved in the preparations for the Taizé European Meeting, to be held in London, just after Christmas. This means meetings, telephone calls and quite frequent visits from an ever widening group of Taizé brothers, who themselves originally came from France, Belgium, Italy, Bangladesh and Hong Kong. It is very refreshing for us having this contact with Taizé and a share in the outreach it means to the community around.

Through all these 'doings' are woven two threads—those of our worship as a family and of our particular, individual forms of work, both of which play a big part in our life and somehow are essential in holding us together and making for depth and stability.

Brother Damian writes:

BELFAST Life in Northern Ireland is usually full of surprises and it is impossible to write an up-to-date picture of our present state of affairs for publication in two months' time. What makes the news today—often because it is so horrific—is forgotten within days, and not only by the national press but sadly also by the locality. Perhaps that is our way of coping?

There may be therefore some purpose in reporting here some of those things which continue to go on in spite of the Troubles, and which may in due time have a chance of a more lasting significance and basis for hope, and help to balance the picture we all tend to get.

Firstly David Jardine has now served six years as Anglican Chaplain at Crumlin Road Prison. He has even earned himself the title of the longest standing prison chaplain in the Province! He would say himself that he has never felt so grateful or glad to have the opportunity to work in this context. His consistent pastoral care of the inmates, leading the regular worship in the prison together with his teaching in class gives a real chance to get down to the root-causes of man's downfall. Not only does he witness several 'changed lives' but he also can use his

opportunity to encourage a constant growing in Christian faith, which to some of us seems essential follow-up work to the conversion experience. We pray here particularly for David on Tuesdays.

We are privileged to serve in three regular Parish Churches in Belfast—Brother Hubert is at S. Thomas' Church under Canon Elliott and also in S. George's Church under Canon Turner. Both Rectors are heavily engaged in circles outside their respective parochial boundaries both in the Church of Ireland and in the wider ecumenical movement. Both Hubert and Brother Peter Timothy—now well established in the Shankill Church of the Holy Redeemer—are making new patterns of ministry, just by the sheer *witness* of their serving as Friars and wearing the Franciscan habit. We cannot wear the habit in the open street, it would be misunderstood, provocative and unnecessarily dangerous. But these very causes of tension are themselves becoming a norm, acceptable and even perhaps valued. We pray particularly for Hubert on Wednesdays and for Peter on Sundays.

The Third Order over here have at last shown signs of rebirth. A small group now meet regularly in Dublin and there are the makings of another sub-area in Co. Derry. Sylvia Sandys is able to hop over the border from Donegal for the latter meetings; she is now pioneering a tiny retreat in Donegal when she recently moved 'South' (it's actually North-West!) with her family. They have just acquired a caravan to provide accommodation to those who will no doubt come in a steady flow for space and refreshment and counsel. The Third Order in Belfast together with our many friends from all over are helping to set-up and finance this venture which is yet another small sacrament of reconciliation and bridge-building. We pray for Sylvia and her family on Thursdays.

We are more than anything else in need of your prayers: join with us in thanksgiving for all the strength and opportunity He provides for our little S.S.F. in Ireland, perhaps particularly now for having lent us Brother Paschal for a season; and pray with us for a new start, new expectancy and new hope for a new year—marked for us particularly as Brother William Henry arrives from Cambridge to share our life.

Our life in Truro has been enriched by the addition of Brother John
TRURO Francis to the family and the emergence of a budding theologian in Birmingham who keeps us on our toes with lively correspondence heavily charged with the mysteries of the minor prophets and the creative tensions of a college which has Methodists and Anglicans trying to make sense of our differences. It is not always realised that there are more Methodists than Anglicans in Cornwall so that it obviously seemed right that David Columba should go to a college which reflects that situation. He seems to have settled in happily at Queens College and is making his own distinctive mark.

John Francis has taken over the task of accompanying Michael all over the Diocese and is already being invited to preach, etc. He has also emerged as an enthusiastic gardener much encouraged by a priest who stayed with us for a while and who helped us through all the autumn pruning and clearing up. David Columba produced a bumper crop of tomatoes and waged an endless and losing war with the slugs.

Apart from the all-important task of helping to keep the balance right in the maintenance of our life in the house Malcolm has increasing responsibility in pastoral care of individual men and women and preaching, conducting quiet days, etc. His next undertaking is to organise the A.P.R. for the Diocese.

For all of us there has been a fairly considerable pressure throughout the summer. For a lot of the time Michael retained his mobility with the help of crutches and sticks (including what turned out to be quite adventurous trips to London and York for Synods, etc.). But it was a tax on the house at a time when we were without a Diocesan or a dean so that an extra weight of responsibility fell inevitably on us all. Now we are delighted that Peter Mumford has become our Bishop.

Michael has accepted an invitation to be on A.R.C., the committee concerned with Anglican/Roman Catholic relations, and also has become chairman of the Social Policy Committee of the Board for Social Responsibility. We all feel that these are ways in which a Franciscan witness can be made and once more he will be working with members of the Third Order.

Brother Jonathan writes:

ALNMOUTH New Bishop. It was a very happy coincidence that the Minister General, Brother Geoffrey, was making his visit to the Friary at the time of Bishop Alec Graham's Installation and therefore was able to accompany the brothers to the service and Civic Reception. Bishop Alec paid his first visit to Alnmouth a few days afterwards.

A Visiting Friar. Brother Derek was with us, off and on, for a good deal of the summer and it was a joy to have him around again. In between engagements, holiday and packing, he managed to make habits, cook delicious pizzas and generally help us feel that he had never been away.

Parish Visits and Missions. As usual at this time of the year, we have received a large number of parish groups, among them a party from S. Wilfred's, Halton, Leeds—thereby helping to deepen even further our links with Yorkshire and Leeds in particular. Another notable visit was an ecumenical group from Earsdon, Whitley Bay. At the same time we welcomed a group from S. Anthony's, Walker, where a Children's Mission had been held the year before. Happily, Brother Paschal arrived back from Belfast on the same day and was able to renew friendships made during the mission. Several of the brothers are currently involved in missions of various kinds—Peter Douglas at Cookridge, Leeds; Jonathan at S. Mary's, Monkseaton; and looking forward, David Stephen and Jerome at Whitehaven; and Jude at Burnley. All of us who do this work rely very heavily on the prayerful support of our friends.

Movements of Friends. Two of our close friends—Eric Zachau and David Smith—are moving into new work. Eric is leaving Earsdon to become vicar of Bamburgh, and David is leaving S. Mary's, Monkseaton to become Archdeacon of Lindisfarne and vicar of Felton. We wish them both joy and strength in their new areas of ministry.

Radio Broadcast. We were glad to record for BBC Radio Newcastle, a service which went out on All Saints' Day, to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Birth

of Saint Francis. There were a couple of interesting moments during the recording session, but you would never know . . . !

A New Ministry. Brother Eric, who returned to Alnmouth in February, is working on a part-time basis with the Northumberland and Durham Mission to the Deaf and Dumb and we are all very glad to be able in this way to have a ministry with a group of handicapped people in the North-East. In October, sixty of them made a memorable visit to the Friary on a Sunday afternoon. Many of us felt that the service in chapel was one of the most inspiring ever held there. The £400 raised by Brother Jonathan in the Great North Run was given towards the work of the mission.

Weekends. We have had a number of what can only be described as 'outstanding' weekends in recent months. At the end of August, a beautiful weekend on 'Dance in Worship' led by Gillian Martlew; closely followed in early September by a Jewish-Christian Weekend led by Rabbi Michael Boyden and Dr. John Sawyer. The celebration of the Passover and particularly the meal in our refectory will not easily be forgotten; and last, but by no means least, the weekend on prayer led by Bishop Michael Ramsey. Elsewhere in THE FRANCISCAN, you will find a list of some of the events planned for the next six months.

Visits. We greatly appreciated and benefited from Brother Geoffrey's visit in July, together with Brother Benedict. It was good to see Brother Amos, if but briefly on his way back from Scotland. It was a special privilege for us to entertain the Lord Mayor of Newcastle to lunch at the end of October. Councillor Abrahams had been very gracious to some of us on two occasions during the summer, the civic reception after the bishop's installation and the reception for the Anglican Consultative Council and it was good to be able to hear about some of the problems—many of them grave—confronting the city at this time and to repay in a very small way, his generous hospitality. The Bishop of Jarrow, Brother Michael C.G.A., conducted our monthly Quiet Day in October and gave two memorable addresses.

The Northern Rally was held as usual on the second Saturday in October and a large number of Tertiaries, Companions and friends gathered in the Cathedral for the Mass and Meeting. We were honoured by the presence of the Bishops of Newcastle and Durham. Brother Anselm and Brother Juniper spoke at the afternoon meeting.

Arrivals and a Departure. Brother Jude arrived at Alnmouth in late September following his time at Glasshampton and it is good to have him back. Two young men, Barry Robson and John Simmons arrived at about the same time to share the life of the brothers for a time and we are very grateful for all that they give us. We hope that in December another young man, Ken Steventon who comes from Westerhope in Newcastle, will be coming to join the family for a while. Paul Hobkirk who lived with us for two years started at Essex University in October and seems to be settling in well. We welcome Barry, John and Ken and wish Paul every blessing in his future life.

Brother Ian writes:

PILTON Dividends are now being received, the fruit of eight years of being in Pilton. One feels that the brothers are now becoming more widely accepted both as individuals and as a group.

This embracing of the brethren has been encouraged by many factors: the work of Juniper in raising a peace group; that of Crispin amongst parishioners and others; the many activities of James Anthony, not least his efforts to keep in order the gardens of the elderly and sick; and I welcome the young to make use of the friary most evenings, where they hopefully find a discipline and orderliness which is not otherwise present in their lives.

We have been much heartened by visits from brothers, not least that of the Minister General and of Amos, who has helped us to understand the complexities of life in Tanzania.

The brothers have thought much about their witness as seen in their lifestyle and feel that things could well be simplified: it is a fact that we ought to make a positive stand against consumerism. It is the small things of life that we would gladly share, and the smile of a child or a kind word received are equally of value with the outcome of our larger projects.

Sister Eileen Mary writes:

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME Sister Mildred and I remain here to be the stable members of the house while there have been various other changes of sisters. We have said a fond farewell to Sister Lynda Mary and rejoiced at a distance at Sister Eleanor Bridget's profession in first vows. She is now at Compton Durville and both she and Nan look forward to a period of home leave soon. Nan is looking after our guests now—except when she is away on mission commitments, which recently have been quite often.

Jeannette joined us in November and Pauline is spending a couple of months here to help us out. Our activities in and out of the house continue to prosper. The local Tertiaries—now a separate group, known as North Staffordshire—continue to meet here regularly bi-monthly. Ahead, plans are well in hand for a very special celebration for the Year of S. Francis. There will not be a festival afternoon at the house this year, rather we hope all our friends within travelling distance will make their way to Lichfield Cathedral on 5 June, 1982. We hope that there will be a Eucharist at noon (outside, if possible), various happenings in the afternoon and ending around 4.30 p.m. Our diocesan bishop, Kenneth Skelton will be the celebrant and Brother Michael will be preaching. This really promises to be a most exciting day and we hope for a large number to come and share in the festivities. The Close can hold some thousand or so, I am told! Please make a note of the date and regard this as an open invitation.

Brother Vincent writes:

LLANDUDNO Over the past few months, a number of changes have taken place in the friary. In late August, Justin moved to Harbledown, via a month at Glasshampton, after spending a year or so with us. Then, at the end of September, Raphael moved to S. David's University College, Lampeter, to be the Anglican Chaplain. However, he will be returning for Christmas and the New Year. Another departure from the house is Silyn: this is not a permanent move as he is spending some months in the Llandaff diocese in order to undertake general mission work.

While most of the movement has been from the house, we have welcomed as a new member Sister Sheila. She has quietly fitted in to our mixed family of brothers and sisters and is now teaching P.E. part-time in one of the local schools.

Like most families, we have had our share of illness. In September, Silyn was admitted to hospital with pneumonia: thankfully, he has now been given a clean bill of health. James was also in the same hospital at the same time receiving treatment to help him with his walking. Unfortunately, his health has not kept up and he is again in hospital for further treatment.

With all the activities of the last few months, the garden has understandably been somewhat neglected. However, in spite of the neglect we still have some lovely winter flowers blossoming to brighten our lives.

Finally, in this Year of S. Francis, it was a great joy to have been invited to attend a Roman Mass of Celebration, in S. Francis Church, Rhayader, in mid-Wales. The Mass was celebrated by the Right Reverend John Aloysius Ward O.F.M. Cap. Bishop of Menevia, and was attended by a representative gathering of Roman Catholic Franciscan friars from the whole of Wales, and made a memorable start to the year.

Brother Giles writes:

HARBLEDOWN The main theme of these notes must be change, because looking back over the last few months, that is the most conspicuous ingredient of our life. The first change is our immediate environment. Those who know Harbledown will be interested to learn that the old thatched barn and the outbuildings next to it have been sold by our neighbouring farmer to an architect and a builder respectively. They are in the process of converting the buildings into two houses. This has encouraged us to plant a screen of trees and shrubs along the bottom of the garden and also alongside the road. The second change is that the hospital trustees have had a road built from near the old barn to a new car park at the further end of the hospital buildings. This means that our own parking area will be available to our own visitors, rather than hospital visitors, and also that those drivers who dislike, with reason, the entrance and exit to and from the friary, can use the new car park as an alternative. The third change is that the new Canterbury by-pass has been opened. This means that the whole village is much quieter as our own by-pass is by-passed, and the heavy traffic, to and from Dover, is no longer heard.

Apart from these changes to our environment, there have also been changes amongst the brothers. John Francis moved to Truro at the end of August, and Ramon has been lent to Hilfield for three months. In July, John Mark came to us from Hilfield and in October Justin from Llandudno. Different brothers means an alteration of work and ministries. John Mark has taken up the chaplaincy duties at S. Augustine's psychiatric hospital. Justin hopes to be able to do some chaplaincy work in the local prison as well as other voluntary work, while Ian Leslie hopes to assist the university chaplaincy team with pastoral work at the College of Technology. These specific ministries, of course, supplement the various activities which we do at and from the friary itself. There has been a continual demand for brothers to preach, lead quiet days, give talks, and take part in missions, and also a continual stream of people using the friary. Our visiting groups and guests have their usual

international flavour, which is stimulating and interesting. Among the more notable visitors of the last few months have been a group of African youth leaders from Kenya and a party of Belgian pilgrims. We also had very well attended days for the Third Order and Companions respectively.

In relation to the latter groups, we would like to advertise two different kinds of events for the Franciscan family in the South-East for 1982. To commemorate the 800th anniversary of the birth of S. Francis, there will be a Franciscan Family Day at Cranbrook, Kent, on Saturday, 24 July. All members of the Franciscan family and their friends are invited and details will be circulated to Tertiaries, Companions and Pilgrims by their respective organisations. We are also inviting local parishes dedicated to S. Francis to send representatives. The day will begin with a eucharist in the parish church at 12.00 noon. This will be followed by a picnic lunch, some form of pageant and music, and tea. Further details will be available from the friary nearer the time. Also in 1982, as a response to *The Gospel Now*, the brothers at Harbledown are opening the friary on the first Saturday of each month (except October) to all members of our Franciscan organisations and friends. This doesn't mean that the friary isn't open to them at other times, but that this day will be reserved each month for what we are calling a 'Franciscan Fraternity'. The friary will be available from 12.00 noon until 7.00 p.m. for a programme of prayer, fellowship and recreation. Those who come are invited to arrive when they like and stay for as long as they like, and the only two arranged parts of the programme will be a eucharist at 12.30 p.m. and evening prayer at 5.00 p.m. Lunch, tea and supper will be available on a 'pot luck' basis—it depends what you bring!

Changes aren't necessarily unsettling and can indicate growth and development. We look forward to two important changes in the lives of brothers in the friary—Ramon has been elected to profession and expects to make his vows at Hilfield in December, and Ian Leslie has been elected to life profession. We hope this will take place next July when his parents will be visiting England.

Brother Robert Hugh writes:

AMERICAN PROVINCE About the time the January issue of *THE FRANCISCAN* reaches you the professed friars of the American Province will be gathered at the Bishop's Ranch for their General Chapter. This non-legislative meeting is the first in the American Province since 1970—when all our brothers were living at Little Portion just before we opened our work in California. This time brothers will be arriving in California from the East Coast and from the West Indies. Please keep us in your prayers as we seek to discern God's will for our life together and for our future ministry.

Sister Cecilia writes:

THE COMMUNITY OF S. FRANCIS We give thanks for the novicing in November of Suzanne Elizabeth and for Pamela Clare's profession in December. Also in November Ruth attended the Novice Guardians' conference in Toronto.

One of the things which came out of our Conference. 'The Gospel Now' was a desire for a deepening of the relationship between the Third Order and the sisters and brothers who live in community within the Society. It was therefore a great joy for me and some of the First Order brothers to share in the Third Order Convocation at Seattle last Fall.

Following what has become a San Francisco tradition, the First and Third Order sisters and brothers were again responsible for the New Year's Eve Eucharist at Grace Cathedral. Inevitably it carried forward the theme of celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of Francis and the address was given by the Rev. Michael Daniel, Society of the Atonement, Staff Officer for Ecumenical Affairs in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco.

As we continue to celebrate, may we really listen to what God is asking of all Franciscans today.

Peace and all good in 1982.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE ISLANDS PROVINCE

Brother Francis Joses writes:

HONIARA In June, 1981, I was asked to attend a social welfare course at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. It was one of the many short courses offered at the Institute of Social and Administrative Studies every year. Among the course participants were people from Western Samoa, the Kingdom of Tonga, Fiji and the Solomon Islands. These people represented either their governments or churches. From the Solomons, only the government and the Anglican Church were able to send participants.

The course itself was only a month course, which wasn't long enough, as there were a lot of things to be learned. The course was geared towards social welfare in general, with emphasis on the current social problems affecting the regions of the South Pacific. One side of the picture in this area is the 'tourist paradise' but the other is the social problems: from the civil servant whose time is ruled by the clock down to the illiterate man who sees time as useless. It might be said that this whole attitude to time is the cause of modern social problems during these rapid changes in development, both socially and economically.

Brother Francis writes:

ALANGAULA It is the custom in the Solomons for people of the whole district to gather when a village church is keeping its patronal festival. So we brothers decided this year to send out invitations throughout the Island to join us for S. Francis Day. Some folk began to arrive on the eve, but well before the eucharist was to start at 8.00 a.m., over three hundred people with a number of vocal babies were already in the church, some having walked many miles along bush tracks from the other side of the Island.

Father Paul, the chaplain of Pawa Secondary School was the celebrant and brought with him a contingent of boys and girls from the School. The music for the service was provided by the brothers and several village choirs, and different languages—English, Pijin and the local Ugi—were heard. I preached in English on the Franciscan way of life. Our festivals here are quite literally actual feasts. With

help from our local Companions, the brothers began to prepare several days in advance. It seemed opportune that one of our cows should have had a miscarriage that same week and had to be shot. Otherwise, we should have had to have sacrificed one or two of our goats. We gave some chickens, and some brothers caught fish for the repast. These were accompanied by rice and kumara, the local form of potato, and cassava pudding. The food was prepared in the customary way, portions of it being wrapped up in leaves and cooked in the open on a large bed of burning charcoal covered with banana leaves. It was all then laid out on fresh banana leaves in five long lines near the beach. The brothers sang the grace and sang choruses during the meal, and speeches were made. Drinks were provided made from bananas, pineapples and Fanta, with a little wine from Honiara to make it sparkle.

After the remaining food had been collected and cleared away, the brothers began some lively dances in custom dress, the two leaders wearing fearsome animal masks. Pawa schoolgirls performed some Maori dances and there was custom dancing by some of the villagers. During the afternoon, the brothers arranged various competitions and some games of volley ball were played until nearly sundown. Old issues of *Span* were given away as prizes!

The festival was a very happy occasion and it made us feel that we were indeed part of the Island family. The following day, the brothers went for a well-earned picnic, which turned into a feast, because it was discovered that a certain brother, more interested in talking to his friends, forgot to put out all the meat at the festival, so there was a 'thank you, Brother G. A. !'

Brother Brian writes:

AUSTRALIA AND

NEW ZEALAND PROVINCE

It was within a few days after returning from England, where along with others I had been present at the 'Gospel Now' conference, that I found myself elected Minister of the new Australia and New Zealand Province. There were then only a few weeks in which to prepare for the first Chapter which was held in Auckland at the end of July. Being a new province it was inevitable that the agenda would be long. It was the first time that a chapter of this kind had met at Auckland. For some it was their first visit to New Zealand.

There were some major decisions to be made. Almost since the beginning the Brookfield Friary has attempted to undertake care work of people sent to us by outside agencies alongside novice training. Although this has had its merits it became clear that the geography of Brookfield made it difficult to do both things in the same place. So often the training of novices has suffered. Brookfield is now a quieter friary to which people come singly or in groups for reflection, discussion or retreat. From Brookfield the brothers go to various centres to

undertake care work there. Brother Wayne was elected Guardian; and with the other professed brothers of the custody, in consultation with myself, he will for the time being be responsible for novice training. Brother Reginald moves from the Auckland Friary to Brookfield to be tutor to both novices and brothers in simple profession. It was felt the wisdom and experience of older brothers were needed and the custody is very happy that the European Province has agreed to the transfer of Brother (Bishop) William Lash for eighteen months.

Morris House at Taringa continues its residential care work. Brother Bruce Paul who has been in charge of it for the past two and a half years moves to the Auckland Friary and will be succeeded at Morris House by Brother Masseo. We all rejoiced when he was professed in life vows on 2 September in the presence of the Bishop Protector, Kenneth Mason. Paul James, another brother at Morris House made his profession on 8 September.

Regrettably the Chapter found it necessary to withdraw from one centre owing at this stage to an insufficient number of experienced professed brothers. The house at Islington in Newcastle has now closed. However, we are still committed to the Diocese of Newcastle through The Hermitage at Stroud. An annexe is to be built there so that we can accommodate more brothers or visitors. Brother Peter has moved to Stroud and Brother Joseph will be attached to it while he completes his University studies at Newcastle. It is proposed that novices will spend a period of their training at Stroud. When numbers improve we hope to be able to have a second house again in the Diocese of Newcastle.

The Third Order in Australia is planning to have its first General Chapter at the Morpeth Conference Centre. The Bishop of Newcastle will be celebrating and preaching at the opening Eucharist and I have been asked to preach at the closing one. Among speakers will be a member of the Third Order, Canon Robert Butterss, Chairman of the Australian Board of Missions, who will help us to understand the needs and aspirations of the Aborigine people. We all rejoice that another Tertiary, Canon James Warner, who is so helpful to the brothers in Brisbane, has been appointed Principal of S. Francis' Theological College there.

I write these notes soon after S. Francis' day. We have had a splendid weekend of worship and fellowship with our Roman Catholic

Franciscan brethren in Sydney and in Newcastle. The service in Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, will long be remembered. It was mainly planned by Brother Joseph in co-operation with the Dean and Precentor. The brothers at Brisbane and at Auckland also joined with our Roman Catholic brethren to begin the 800th anniversary year of the birth of S. Francis.

Letter to Companions

Alnmouth Friary
November, 1981

Dear Companions,

Each evening at Compline we pray for our brothers and sisters, Clares, Tertiaries and last of all for the Companions. This is where you are on the Intercession Paper—last—not very important, not very noticeable. Least of all the members, little ones, thank God for the place to which he has called you.

What seems most important is that Companions promise to pray for the Society, that God will bless his work which we try to do. Many Companions are old and housebound, some are young and eager—both of these have so much to offer. No one *promises* to go to meetings, but to pray.

I'm conscious of years of care and work, letters and visits by faithful secretaries and chaplains, brothers and sisters. For so long Brother Kenneth loyally and lovingly served you—and many others since. Most recently Raphael gave, amongst other things, an organised shape.

If you have any enquiries please write either to me or to your local secretary (a list of which will I hope be in the next FRANCISCAN). Jude types the letters and together we'll try in every way we can.

I'll write once in a while in THE FRANCISCAN (and hopefully there'll be some news in the 'Chronicle' section at the front).

Some of you wrote kind welcoming letters—thank you. Please pray for us all.

With all good wishes,

KEITH,

Warden of Companions.

Letter to Brother Kenneth

Dear Brother Kenneth,

Last Sunday, 25 October, I heard the BBC Radio 2 programme being broadcast from your friary.

It brought back a lot of memories to me, as I was a guest there for about eight weeks in November, 1928.

It is a long time ago I know, but over the years I have often wondered whether it was able to carry on, and was delighted to hear that the great work still goes on.

At the time I was there, I think it was then known as Flowers Farm.

Brother Douglas was then in charge, and Brother John used to be Secretary-Bursar.

I suppose I was one of the lucky ones, as I and a friend left London, to go to Yeovil, Somerset, hoping to find work there.

We arrived there on the Friday afternoon, and had no alternative but to go to the local workhouse. However we were very fortunate, as in the morning we both had to see the Workhouse Master, he was very helpful and told us he thought it would be tragic to see two respectable young men, have to continue on the road.

He gave us a letter of introduction, and we then arrived at Batcombe on the Saturday evening, we were made very welcome, strange as it may seem I became the cook!

Eventually B.S.F.A. as it used to be known, sent me to a little place in Sussex as a cook.

It was not easy in those far-off days, and the future seemed very black, in the event this went on for about four years, I eventually went to London where I started for a big bakery firm, until 1941, when I went into the army. Coming out in 1946 and going back to the bakery where I stayed until 1952.

I then came to Bristol, and went to work for J. Lyons & Co. for whom I worked until the end of 1974 when I retired.

I am 73 now, and live on my own but felt that after hearing your programme I just had to write and say a very heartfelt 'thank you' because I've thought hundreds of times, without the help I had at that time, God only knows what sort of a life I should have finished up with.

While writing I must mention Brother Pritchard and his wife, who used to run the hostel at Sherborne.

Please accept this letter in the spirit in which it is written and I can only wish you all success in the work for the future.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

(Name and address supplied)

Talking About Mission

BY MARTIN REARDON



THEOLOGIANS sometimes appear, in laymen's eyes, to use the word 'mission' in big and imprecise ways. They talk of the 'Mission of God' or 'the Church is Mission'. They use the word in global or even cosmic ways which are not of immediate help to local congregations or Christians trying to understand their particular Christian task in the world.

In common parlance, on the other hand, the word mission is often used in very narrow and precise ways. We read of space missions or military missions or trade missions. In these cases we think of limited tasks, sometimes programmed and monitored by computers, with specific goals whose success can be assessed by their managers partly in arithmetical terms.

The Church oscillates between these two poles. Sometimes we hear lectures on the proclamation of the Kingdom or puzzle over scriptural references such as 'To me . . . God has granted . . . the privilege of proclaiming to the Gentiles the good news of the unfathomable riches of Christ, and of bringing to light how this hidden purpose was to be put into effect. It was hidden for long ages in God the creator of the universe, in order that now, *through the Church*, the wisdom of God in all its varied forms might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the realms of heaven' (Eph. 3, 8—10, N.E.B.). The effect of this cosmic language, if we begin to understand it, is either numbing or else so daunting that it creates a sense of guilt that we are not even beginning to tackle mission.

At the other pole we talk about parish missions or campaigns (which too often are Church-extension programmes), and we check our attendance registers to see how our mission is going. All this sometimes seems closer to proselytism than mission. In the *International Review of Missions*, April, 1980, Lesslie Newbigin distinguishes proselytism from genuine witness in four ways:

1. It is an activity of the Christian group which can be planned and carried through in the same style as a military campaign or the promotional drive of a big organisation. The element of mystery is lacking. One can expect a proportion between the investment of effort and the result.

2. The strong and confident Christian group engages in proselytism. It relies on its strength and wisdom to achieve results.
3. The proselytising group does not expect to be changed by the encounter with the world. It expects that numbers will be added, but does not expect to have to learn new things from the converts.
4. The successfully proselytising group is proud of its accomplishments and publishes them as evidence of its spiritual vitality'.

How can we relate the cosmic understanding of mission to the task of the Christian individual or congregation so that they can be helped both to understand and to fulfil more faithfully their role in mission? It is Jesus Christ and the Spirit who hold these poles together.

The Christian concept of mission comes from the sending of Jesus Christ by the Father. He came to reveal God's nature and purpose and to restore the creation to unity with the Father. Indeed God's mission is seen to have existed from the very beginning of the universe when his Word brought order out of chaos. One could say that Mission is part of the creative, providential and redemptive nature of God, and that the 'procession' of Son and Spirit from the Father is an expression of that nature. God's mission will be consummated with the perfection of the universe when God will be all in all.

It is pre-eminently to the sending of Jesus Christ that the Church must look for guidance in understanding its own mission. 'As the Father sent me, so I send you' (John 20, 21, N.E.B.). We cannot, however, simply read off what Jesus did and naïvely attempt to repeat it. Three reasons at least forbid this:

- (a) The world is different today. More profoundly,
- (b) The action of God in Jesus Christ was unique in bringing about our redemption; and
- (c) Jesus' own openness to and understanding of the Father's will were unique.

However, is it possible from a study of the New Testament to discover any characteristics or components of mission which may guide the Church today? Among them we could list the following:

1. *Incarnation*—An interested, listening and loving presence amid the whole of creation, and especially amid all sorts of human life. The teaching of Jesus shows concern for the whole of life and not just the religious aspect of it. Despite his apparently preconceived priority of concern for Jews he is prepared to listen to the needs of a Syro-

Phoenician woman and to respond. He places himself where need and even hostility is expressed, he listens and responds.

2. *Redemption*—He makes the prophecy of Isaiah his own in Nazareth (Luke 4, 18—19) and his ministry is continuously healing and redemptive. He works particularly among the poor and those who know their need of his help. Healing others brings him exhaustion, and redeeming the world involves his self-sacrifice and suffering.

3. *Judgment*—His constant testimony to God's kingdom of justice in the face of evil bring him into conflict with those in power who think they know better.

4. *Naming God*—It may appear otiose to point out that Jesus constantly both addresses the Father in prayer, and also speaks about the Father to others.

5. *Obedience to the Father*—One can list the things Jesus is reported to have said and done. He prayed, he taught, he preached, he healed, he cast out demons, he condemned evil, he fed the hungry, he invited people to become his disciples . . . One cannot establish from the New Testament an order of priority for these activities, and for a simple reason. Jesus did not consider himself to be master of his own programme, but came to do the will of the Father who sent him (John 5, 30). This theme recurs in other parts of the New Testament (*e.g.* Mark 14, 36 and Hebrews 5, 30).

How Jesus knew his Father's will remains a Christian mystery, but two pointers are clear. He was constant in prayer, and he meditated on the Scriptures. It was presumably through prayer and meditation on the Scriptures that God indicated to him at Caesarea Philippi that the time had come for that inexorable journey to Jerusalem and death which provides the pivot of Mark's Gospel and the keynote of Matthew and Luke. After Pentecost the young Church also looked for guidance and direction of its mission from outside. The Acts of the Apostles portrays a Church, at least once naïvely by casting lots, seeking guidance and led by the Spirit.

6. *Integrity*—Again it may seem otiose to point out that Jesus practised what he preached. But very early the Church realised that what Jesus said and did could be understood only in terms of who he was. The Synoptic Gospels place the recognition of Jesus' Messiahship as immediately preceding the prophecy of his death and the start of his journey to Jerusalem. His saying and doing had consistency because

of his being, and his being was not self-explanatory, but could only be understood in terms of his obedience to the Father, his ultimate reference point.

Is it helpful to apply these six characteristics to the role of the Christian and the Church in mission?

(1) Are we present and listening to the needs of the world as others express them, and do we respond even if it upsets our priorities? Or do we insulate ourselves from hearing the world's clamant problems by organising a welter of activities on Church premises (some of which are intended to meet what *we think* the world's needs *should* be)?

(2) Christian history provides continuous evidence that it is when the Church genuinely serves the poor, when it remains faithful under pressure, when it tries to forgive and to heal under persecution, that Christ is glorified and many turn to him. This does not mean that we should *seek* persecution. It does mean that genuine faithfulness to Christ's redemptive work will always mean self-sacrifice, and often involve exhaustion, if not suffering.

(3) The challenging of the powers-that-be is not easy to write about in general terms. Jesus seems not to have indulged in it on principle or lightly. He chose his moments and was prepared for the consequences.

(4) A young West African Christian visiting the North-East of England recently commented on how reticent the English were to name the Name—except in formal acts of worship in Church. There is no Christian mission where the Name is never named. This reticence is probably the greatest weakness in mission on the part of the average English Christian. We shall return to this point.

(5) Obedience to the Father meant for Jesus that in the end, on the Cross, he had nothing to hang on to for reassurance in this world—and even the Father seemed to have abandoned him. This is the most difficult lesson for us to learn in mission. It is not *our* mission. The programme is directed from elsewhere. As Bishop Newbigin wrote, there is an 'element of mystery' in true mission, for God alone can convert a person to himself, and we can only point to God. This is not an argument against plans and programmes and goals in mission. It is a demand that those plans, programmes and goals must constantly be reviewed in the light of prayer and

reflection on Scripture. How often do we review our personal Christian life-styles, or the programmes and activities of our Churches in this way? One of the encouraging Anglican developments has been the growth of *Partnership in Mission*, whereby Christians in one part of the world invite some from elsewhere to help them to review their own engagement in mission. Christians who live in each locality and country have the responsibility before God for the Christian mission in that particular locality and country; but they will be wise if from time to time they seek the help of other Christians in other places. For in the end our responsibility is not to *manage* the mission, but to respond to God's calling and management of it.

(6) The preaching and activities of the Church will carry conviction only if they show a Church whose being is the Body of Christ. The Church's mission is not simply to say things and do things, but to say things and do things because it *is* a foretaste and sign of the Kingdom of God.

This article began with two poles, a broad and cosmic theology of mission, and our own small engagement in mission as individual Christians or parishes. We need help in testing the latter by the former. We also need help in earthing the former in the latter, for mission in the abstract is nothing, and genuine mission takes place only in a particular place at a particular time.

There are, however, two other poles which need to be held together—worship and mission. Too often we think of worship as what we do with God in Church and mission as what we do with others outside the Church. Too often we think of worship as topping us up with power which we then have to go out and share with others who do not know God.

In both worship and mission God takes the initiative. In both our role is to wait upon his leading and to respond, and in both he can take us out of our depth into dangerous waters.

The Englishmen's reticence about naming God outside the Church may, in part, be shyness. It is also because many of us do not think of him much outside Church. Worship and everyday life have become separated. In Church we piously mouth the classic prayers—'Thy will be done'. In everyday life we focus upon what *we* want. We need to bring mission into the Church building, and to become conscious outside it of God's concern for the world. English Christians will not easily

discover how to speak honestly and simply about what God means to them in the middle of everyday life until their everyday concerns become more closely woven with the fabric of their private prayer and public worship. This is a dangerous suggestion to make, that our particular worldly concerns might find a place in public worship. It can only be done constructively if the President of worship is both sensitive and a skilled leader; and if he knows from his discussions with the members of the congregation how they are struggling with the ethical problems they meet in the everyday world and the testimony they bear to Jesus in these circumstances. Yet if we can talk about our everyday concerns in the context of prayer and worship with other Christians, we shall find it easier to talk about God in the context of our everyday concerns with others who may not be Christians, and vice-versa.

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Downward and Outward: Integral Evangelism

*Reflections arising from three international Christian
Conferences in 1980*

BY SIMON BARRINGTON-WARD



The Original Centre

THERE is no doubt that for the first founders of C.M.S. the heart of all their humane endeavours in the building up of Sierra Leone, the battle against the Slave Trade, the fostering of educational and technical institutions, and of agriculture, trade and industry as economic alternatives to slavery, was a burning desire to win people to faith in Christ. Their other further activities were not seen so much as secondary or ancillary to the first, as an integral part of it. To bring people to Christ was to bring them, like those who came 'out of the belly of the ship' into the dazzling new world of Freetown as it then was, into a transformed life. However much the Victorian understanding of that transformation was culturally and socially limited to their own concep-

tion of 'civilisation' (the 'Bible and the Plough', or, later, 'Christianity and Commerce'), surely their intuition that the Gospel implies a whole new way of life and pattern of society was accurately biblical. The Gospel would bring into being in each new disciple a change of heart affecting all his/her relationships.

I was reminded of this on meeting a young girl from Zimbabwe, daughter of white settlers from Wales originally, when I was in Cardiff. She poured out the story of the conflict in which she was still immersed within her family. At the age of sixteen, in the then 'Rhodesia', she had been converted to Christ through a friend. This conversion meant crossing more than one Rubicon. She went to a multi-racial Christian camp. She was brought consciously into a new relationship with herself, and with fellow countrymen 'in Christ'. She found herself looking at the whole situation with newly enlightened eyes. In arguments with her family she found that her new commitment had brought her on to the other side of a great gulf which separated her, in her new fellowship of black and white alike, from the hard and insensitively superior attitudes in which she realised she had grown up. Yet she struggled admirably to love and respect her parents and would not give up hope of eventually bringing them round. Indeed, as the new Zimbabwe approached, even though they would not essentially change their outlook, she found she was able to help them to adjust. The demands of her newfound faith were more than matched for her by the new resources of love made available to her in Christ.

This brought alive for me strongly again a question of which I often felt the force while taking part last year in the evangelistic conference at Pattaya so soon after its ecumenical counterpart at Melbourne. Should not the 'personal gospel' so passionately preached by many of those assembled at Pattaya, with a fervour for evangelism largely lacking at Melbourne, be of such a character that it in fact brought alive in those whose hearts it changed, a new awareness of injustice, a new identification with the poor and oppressed, of the kind so loudly advocated at Melbourne, but conspicuously absent in large parts of Pattaya? Would not the social commitment of Melbourne give a practical weight and content, an earthed realism, to fill out the new disciple's response to the personal gospel of Pattaya? And surely at Melbourne we had need of that gospel, to deliver those from North and South from their guilt and resentment respectively, to lift them above the *Law*, the vehement moralism of the conference, and to open up resources of forgiveness

and love, which would give a different shape and quality to their social and political action.

What oppressed one at Pattaya was the political unawareness, the total social and cultural insulation of the North American 'management' of the conference, something akin to the 'born again' movement, in its inaccessibility to the Third World protests which arose even among evangelicals. Ironically the Third World critics and their European allies were tempted to turn the title of the conference 'How shall they hear?' intended to apply to the 'unreached peoples', back on to the organisers of the conference themselves. What oppressed one at Melbourne was the monotonous political and economic dogmatism, equally in danger of becoming conformed to this world, as its spokesmen and women in their interpretation of 'your kingdom come' sounded daily more like the Zealots of New Testament times than the disciples of Christ.

It seems that an evangelistic concern without any social or political implications is naïve, whereas a political and social attitude, without any evangelistic heart, is soon distorted. Both can be equally unreal, over-simplified and ultimately conformed to this world. To be rooted in the whole Gospel, and thus branching out vigorously into the whole of life, is to learn more of what it really means and costs to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves', in the world, but not of it. It is to develop an evangelistic approach which encompasses the issues raised for the whole world Church at Melbourne. But it is to do so in the strength of the resources of enthusiasm, the personal passion for communicating the Gospel itself, to which Pattaya gave expression. On the one hand Jesus said 'Without me you can do nothing'. But on the other 'I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly'.

Downward—the message of Melbourne

In our work of becoming again a fellowship of evangelists, then we must take some of the insights of Melbourne deep into our thinking and action. We must be:

Aware. 'Watch': the instruction of Jesus to his disciples is to be vigilant and ready to discern evil, a recurrent New Testament theme. To be spiritually aware is also to be socially, economically and politically aware; to be aware of the complexity and ambiguity of all that we

are engaged in overseas and in this country. To quote a South American comment on missionaries: 'It is no use sending out people who do not know what is at stake—they can produce forms of service which sanction or allow to go unchallenged some of the worst dehumanising processes in our country'. I think of the laments of Bishop Okullu and Bishop Kauma that so few Christians have been trained to be aware of the political implications of their actions. Bishop Kauma particularly regretted the privatising of the East African revival and its failure to bring its vital spirituality to bear on the political and social realities of Uganda; only at a critical point like the Bishops' stand and Archbishop Luwum's whole confrontation with Amin did they begin to see what had been lacking in all that had sprung from the missionary endeavour. The behaviour of the Church in Mrs. Gandhi's first 'emergency' period in India carries the same lessons. The whole naïveté with which missionaries have helped to create an individualised piety in a well-to-do middle-class nurtured in missionary institutions but with no real vision of a just or trans-tribal society, is highlighted by Rene Padilla in his *Christian Mission and Social Action*. I do not really believe with Bishop Wickremesinghe that missionaries should or can be 'political agitators', but they can help to stimulate an awareness of the ambiguities and the challenges of society in the light of the social and political implications of the 'Gospel of the kingdom'.

Involved. No-one could come away from some of the encounters with Third World representatives over the Bible at Melbourne and in the 'Urban Poor' group at Pattaya without being filled with a new commitment to the masses of the poor of the earth. The most impressive witnesses to this commitment and its central place in discipleship to Jesus were men and women with a pastoral heart. They were not theoreticians or 'liberation theologians'. They did not necessarily know anything about 'conscientisation' and 'solidarity' and the rest of the jargon. They were simply those whose love for people had led them to stand for and with the poorest and weakest, the most deprived and least advantaged in their society. For this caring they were prepared to help to resist injustice and risk liberty and life itself. They were close to their master in being people passionately and constantly concerned for the suffering, the loss of dignity or meaning, endured by so many millions of their fellow beings; and they gave to such people the same priority that they undoubtedly have in the kingdom of God. The Church and above all the members of a Society like C.M.S. need to recover

this primary concern for the furthest 'down', those at the 'bottom of the heap', in our own locality and worldwide.

Community based. Bible study and exchange of stories at Melbourne and Pattaya revealed an emphasis on the evangelistic approach, especially to the poor, being made through cells, teams, house groups, 'basic' communities and the like. This was the evangelistic method of Raymond Fung, whose commitment to the Gospel to the poor made a deep impression at both conferences. The Kingdom of God is continuous with the kingdom of David, with II Chronicles and I Samuel (and at a deeper level the desert community of Deuteronomy invoked by the Prophets), and is seen as essentially expressed in a truly sharing and forgiving community (the later petitions of the Lord's Prayer are the beginning of the fulfilment, inaugurated in Christ, of the first petitions). The emphasis is not simply on voluntary poverty nor on pulling down the rich. It is essentially on sharing. There is clear continuity between the summons and teaching of Jesus, e.g. in the Sermon on the Mount, and the early church community of Acts 2 and I Corinthians 12 or II Corinthians 8, the challenge of James 2 and 1 John. There is a continuity between Jesus' promise and summons in Luke 12, 32—33: 'Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that you have and give alms, provide for yourself bags that wax not old, a treasure in heaven that faileth not . . .' and the corporate life described in Acts and Paul's Epistles. Our true evangelistic base will be this kind of sharing, caring community.

Detached. But this is no Zealot utopianism such as we often heard at Melbourne. There is no hint of forceful or sudden revolution; rather, quiet and patient growth and witness, nonetheless 'turning the world upside down'. The New Testament community was as far from the Zealots as the powerful Latin Americans at Melbourne. With the New Testament Church it is different. Institutions such as slavery were penetrated and transformed from within. It was the Gospel of Christ and the expectation of his coming which shaped the personal, social and political witness of the New Testament Church, bringing with it a contrast with the methods of this world, in the weapons of love and forgiveness, but also in a shrewd consciousness of the depths of human sinfulness. This is no rigidly arrogant and un-self-critical radicalism. Christians may, as they were in Somosa's Nicaragua, be constrained to work with Marxists, but they must be as alertly critical

of the tyrannies of the left as of the right. No party or platform of this world can be identified with the Kingdom.

A political stance shaped by the Gospel will be 'politics of forgiveness', soberly aware of human limitations, feeling for provisional pragmatic 'managerial' solutions to this world's problems, ready to work within and pray for this world's ambiguous institutions, which can often be a protection from something worse in a fallen world. There can be no naïve identification of the will of God with either the status quo—repentance is always needed—or with 'progress', or 'history', the liberal and the Marxist idols. I believe we should also be sharply critical of that Marxist analysis which divides the world so simplistically into oppressor and oppressed, and of its reductionist economic determinism. There is a call to a certain critical detachment from the ideologies (idolatries) of this world.

Ernesto Cardinale is said to be teaching theology to Fidel Castro. How will this affect the Cuban leader's attitude, I wonder, to his military ventures in Ethiopia? Christians must not allow an ingenious exegesis of the Bible to give some of its key themes a plausible but alien content. There are no Christian blueprints in this world. Only a continuous struggle to sketch and to improvise solutions, to 'defend the bad against the worst' until the Coming.

Personal and structural. But Christian theology must be made a resource for life in this world. We need to find more ways of helping people to be 'a new manager, civil servant, politician or trades unionist in Christ'. There is a call, as Margaret Kane has said, for retreats, that 'instead of going out of gear among green fields, are meditative wrestlings for light in complex social situations in an urban industrial setting or a farming community'. Theology in working situations, pastoral care not just for individuals but for 'neighbourhoods, societies and nations'. There is a call for guidance in the exercise of power in openness to God, not just in conformity to worldly norms. There is a need to think structurally and personally, to think in terms not so much of easily floated 'radical alternatives' but of deep modifications of existing patterns; a need for help in the formation of personal attitudes and skills rooted in discipleship, prayer and intercession and drawing on biblical themes and images. Organisational studies may have more to teach us theologically and spiritually about repentance, humility and grace than gross political oversimplification. This may be true internationally. Hence the call to work realistically at the issues raised by

the Brandt Commission and to support its attempt to work within the present structure, weak as it may be.

Outward—the message of Pattaya

What was vitally impressive at Pattaya and in Melbourne was the passionate conviction of a Gospel to be communicated to others. Third World Evangelists were impressive in the singleness, simplicity and joy of their faith and love. They often could not understand our seeming reluctance to share Christ with those who do not know him. Their vital enthusiasm and courage shamed us. The same was true of the Aboriginal leaders in Northern Australia whom I met between the two conferences. They seemed to have rediscovered what the Gospel is about. All these were people 'possessed by love'. With an often gentle but deep-rooted, firmly grasped determination, they were committed to speaking of Christ to others quite naturally and freely, by describing what he meant to them. They summoned us in no uncertain terms to put personal (not necessarily individual) evangelism back at the heart of mission. Our motive, our dynamic, our goal must be to live and express the Gospel with our whole being, and to bring it to others. Evangelism of a certain kind had been almost a dirty word to some at Melbourne, associated with North American dominance and intensiveness, and has been described here in the U.K. as 'theological racism'. What was different about the evangelism of these Third World disciples and many others like them? Evangelism is invalidated only by complacency, superficiality, by a certain powerful imposing upon others, something mechanical and forced. But the evangelism that is genuinely humble, sensitive and above all compassionate—Toyotome's 'evangelism of the ear'—would be less likely to create that kind of resentment, especially when it is rooted in the witness of a caring, sharing community like Raymond Fung's. It becomes then simply the assurance that in Jesus we can know God with us and for us, among us and in us, and can repent. He has entered into our life and death. We can share his death and risen life. Such an evangelism needs to become again the theme of the Church and its agents of mission.

Crossing social, cultural and economic frontiers

In 1980 there was a third gathering of Christians concerned with mission, namely the World Consultation on Frontier Missions which took place in Edinburgh in October.

The very fact of this Consultation was a cause of concern and even distress to some because it represented an old-fashioned view of missionary initiative which is based largely on the Western perceptions and is not related to the Church of the Third World country in which the initiative is proposed.

Nevertheless, whatever one's reaction to the view of the mission agency represented by Edinburgh one cannot escape the clear challenge to be aware of the two to three thousand million people in the world who have yet to be reached in Christ's Name.

The commitment of Edinburgh 1980 reflected that of Pattaya in its urgency in facing the social, cultural and economic as well as the geographical frontiers which separate us from many who have never heard the Gospel.

These frontiers are not always far away: they are all too often very near, and the call to think afresh about and participate in world mission must always relate to our near neighbours as much as to those of other lands.

There are poor and deprived and no doubt oppressed people in our own countries and there are many rich and poor of our own ethnic background and of others who live within walking distance of our homes and work-places who reflect back to us the message of Melbourne, Pattaya, and Edinburgh and its challenge to all Christians to be frontiersmen.

An integral evangel

One of the marks of the leader in a complex organisation is said to be 'tolerance of ambiguity'. To be able to cope with many variables and uncertainties is avowedly a sign of maturity. The Christian hears from here, a call to be concerned for justice, from there a cry for help from the hungry or the homeless and from elsewhere the urgent challenge to save souls.

As though that were not enough there is also the sharp rebuke of fellow Christians from the erstwhile 'young Churches' challenging the assumption that we are the donors and they the recipients of mission. They want to be partners in the struggle and in the grace of redemption.

It would be so much easier if we could settle for one part or other of God's claims upon us and forget the rest but this would be not to grow into full maturity as the sons of God. It is true that some are called to

be apostles, some prophets, some teachers, and so forth, but each is called to exercise his or her ministry within the whole. Each aspect of mission relates to the others and is part of the others. There is no escape. God's word is for all men, it touches the whole of life and reaches everywhere. To compartmentalise the gospel is to negate it. There is one integral evangel. The movement of grace is down to where men are and out to every part of their lives in every place. That is why it is an evangel—why it is Good News.

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Missions Today

BY BROTHER DONALD S.S.F.



'COME over and help us'—so spoke the Macedonian to Paul in a vision. Convinced that he had heard the call of God, Paul lost no time in setting sail for a foreign land where he could break new ground and introduce the good news of Jesus for the first time. It was a missionary journey for the conversion of the heathen. Today, in a country where the gospel has been preached for centuries, there are many requests for missions in many places where some people already have a deep Christian commitment, some have lost the sense of vision and many scarcely know the religion they suppose is theirs. G. K. Chesterton's observation that it is not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting but that it has never been tried is more than ever relevant. So many requests for help come to the brothers and sisters that some have inevitably to be refused because of the shortage of available missionaries and a heavy backlog of outstanding work. However, every effort is always made to respond in some way even if a full-scale mission is for one reason or another impracticable.

The word 'Mission' is often misunderstood and commonly associated with a particular style of campaign popular in former years. It is important that the whole work of Christian witness is seen as the

Mission of the Church with particular events focussing that principle from time to time. Large meetings are often regarded with suspicion because of the danger of any form of mass hysteria, and people are reluctant to attend in great numbers. In spite of this, preaching remains a powerful basis for evangelism and by this means a missionary will hope to challenge people to respond generously to the love of God. In addition there is a common desire for greater participation and to this end a greater variety in the programme is generally appreciated. The exercise will always be a strenuous one for all who are involved but it is important that it should not be seen simply as an end in itself, but rather as an effective period leading on to the renewal of individual faith and the enrichment of the life of the local Christian community. There should be no grounds for the complaint sometimes heard that mission was good whilst it lasted but that there is little to show for it afterwards in terms of results.

Requests for Missions are prompted by a variety of reasons. In one church there may be a healthy life with a strong awareness of identity as the Body of Christ in that district. This is sustained by a strong programme of worship with sacrament and prayer realistically shared by all members and extended by a number of small groups meeting regularly for discussion and discovery. Quiet Days and Conferences are arranged from time to time and many forms of ministry are experienced and encouraged with people generally relating well to one another. The sick and lonely are visited and the distressed well supported and there is a deep and practical concern for the needs of the people of the area and beyond. Personal Christian commitment is evident and the church is involved in sacrificial giving relating to needs beyond its own. A Mission is requested as a focus for the on-going life of the church with a readiness to adjust and change in any way that may give the greater glory to God. In another church there is a very different situation. It has apparently fallen on bad times for the congregation has dwindled, the average age is high and those who remain are very set in their ways and resistant to change in any form. There is frequent reference to the memories of former days when the pews were packed and everything happened. Today the people are certainly loyal but are weighed down with the heavy burden of maintaining deteriorating buildings probably far too large for present needs. There is a desperate need to recover numbers and to bring in the outsiders and a Mission is seen as a last resort. It is hoped that the

missioners will be experts who can accomplish this end. The attitude is only too often one of 'Us' who are in and 'Them' who are out. The insiders have arrived and the outsiders are the ones who need conversion. Here a Mission has very little hope unless it be to revolutionise the regulars. All Christians are on pilgrimage and every individual has much to do before arrival at the kingdom can be accomplished.

Franciscan Missions are not all of the same style. Most of them take place in parishes but others are arranged from time to time in schools, colleges, the Services, prisons and borstals, etc. They may last for any period but are most often programmed to last for one to two weeks. They may be aimed frankly at the faithful congregation by means of a Teaching Mission or Celebration. Alternatively the emphasis may be on reaching out to the lapsed and the unattached. Whilst most Missions are arranged for a single congregation, others relate to a group of Anglican churches or a district of several denominations. Wherever possible there will be at least some ecumenical involvement. The Leader of the Mission may be a brother or sister and will normally be supported by one or more missionaries drawn from the First or Third Orders or beyond. When requests are first received, specific information is requested from the parish priest or chaplain, and this is then considered by the Committee for Mission. If a response then seems possible and desirable, a prospective leader is nominated to investigate the request personally, and after this has been done a final decision is made. Once the project has been accepted the Leader is responsible for working out all future plans in conjunction with the applicant.

It will usually take at least a year to prepare for a full-scale mission and to facilitate this a small local committee will generally be formed. A budget will be needed to cover all estimated expenditure and responsibility will need to be delegated to cover arrangements for publicity, pre-mission visiting, hospitality, mission bookstall, etc. To encourage a prayerful support of the project a Prayer Card is usually printed and distributed to the congregation and their friends and often to Religious Communities. An invitation may be sent to the Diocesan Bishop to commission the team at the beginning of the Mission event. During this preliminary year all events and meetings will as far as possible relate to the Mission. There will normally be a scheme of parish visitation by church members to re-inforce the awareness of the church in that district, to discover current needs and attitudes and to update parish records. A Parish Retreat and a Parish Conference during this

period can be of great value. Publicity by means of posters, car stickers and programmes are usually widely distributed shortly before the mission event.

The Mission Team will usually arrive a day or two before the main programme begins and they will lodge with members of the congregation. In Prison and Borstal Missions the team will sometimes be given accommodation within the institution so that they can share in some degree the life of the residents. As soon as possible there will be a meeting with the congregation, sometimes by means of a social event. If arranged, the commissioning by the Bishop will initiate the proceedings. The programme which follows will enable the team to meet together daily for prayer, study and planning, and mission events provide a variety of ways by which the challenge of the Gospel may be presented. Special provision is sometimes made for children and youth, and visits may be made to schools. Some missions are planned specifically for the younger age group. There will normally be a daily Eucharist at a convenient time and meetings on most days of one kind or another. There will be a challenge through preaching, the possible use of drama and art forms and some meeting in groups and perhaps some special events. The hope will be that many people will respond by a deeper commitment to Christ and to one another and opportunity is provided for confession and resolution. The Team meet people both individually and in groups and in the sharing of experiences seek to encourage and assist people in any way that they can.

Essentially there is the hope that the Holy Spirit will use the event to touch the hearts of many people and so enrich their lives. Whatever results may have been envisaged, it frequently transpires that the unexpected occurs and that new insights are discovered and the way forward indicated. The Mission Team share daily their own feelings about the Mission and before leaving pass on to the parish or Institution some of their observations and suggestions to help with future planning.

Once the Mission event is over and the team have departed for their friaries, convents and homes the really vital work of follow-up begins. A great deal of thought and prayer and work have been offered and of course it must be true that things can never really be the same again. Hopefully there has been a new experience of the Kingdom here on Earth and all will go forward in the power and the glory of God.

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Mission in the Fourth Gospel

BY BROTHER BARNABAS S.S.F.



ALL the gospels are missionary documents, presentations of the *evangelion*, the good news. It is of the essence of missionary work that we bring good news. We have something to say to those in need and to all who will hear.

But missionary zeal can very easily be a substitute for well thought out foundations. The peril which this incurs is not always perceived until it is too late. The present time is particularly vulnerable because of the gulf between the enthusiasts and the theologians. The theologians appear to have forfeited their right to a hearing, because their pronouncements are often so negative and unhelpful. You can't preach the gospel effectively, if you are told that most of what you believe is untrue.

There is thus a great temptation to brush these things aside, and to place all the emphasis on preaching a personal faith, based on your own experience. This is perfectly good, as far as it goes. But it is not enough. The preaching of the gospel makes great demands, physically and mentally. At the end of the day you may feel drained, battered and exhausted. You may think that you have won the argument at the time, but afterwards it appears hollow. Personal faith has an alarming habit of disintegrating as soon as you feel depressed.

Theology is the rational explanation of the Christian faith which we profess and the Christian life which we seek to lead. Precisely because it is rational, it is not a matter of enthusiasm, and it is not subject to vacillation on account of nervous strain. If the theologians are often negative today, it is because they have good reason to point out the weaknesses of the theology, which was suitable for a former age, but which is not suitable for today. If we think that their pronouncements are destructive, we should react positively, and think much more deeply about the fundamentals of our theology.

S. John's Gospel can help us, because it has a quality which makes it less vulnerable to the difficulties which attend Christian belief today. This may seem surprising, because it often seems to be a real bone of contention between the theologians and the enthusiastic evangelists. Since the rise of critical scholarship its historical value has been seriously questioned. Nevertheless it is the source of nearly all the statements

which the modern evangelist relies on to show that Jesus knew himself to be the Son of God.

But if what Jesus says about himself in the Fourth Gospel is not a verbatim report of his words, it may create a problem at one level, but it can solve a problem at another. For why is the Johannine Christ so different from the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels? One reason is that, whereas the Synoptic Gospels make use of the traditions of Jesus as they had been handed down orally with only a moderate degree of editorial adaptation, John radically rewrites the tradition to serve his theological purpose. This means that Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels, who always appears more credible as a character of history, can be allowed to make his own impression upon our imagination for what he is in himself. The Fourth Gospel is then available as a commentary on what we see there, providing its theological explanation.

It is, then, as a theological work that we come to the Fourth Gospel. And the reason for seeking help from it in thinking about mission is that it is a profoundly missionary work. John writes 'that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name' (20, 31). From his work we may discover the *principle* of mission and the *message* which we are to give, and even some idea of the *method* that is to be used in communicating it. These are fundamental matters, which the passing of the centuries has not changed.

* * *

The *principle* is provided in the one and only place where the Greek word *apostolos* occurs. It comes in John's account of the Last Supper, at the conclusion of the episode, only found in the Fourth Gospel, of the washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus. We shall return to this episode when we consider the message and the method of mission. But here we are concerned only with Jesus' comment on it, in which the principle of mission is enunciated: 'Amen, amen, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is *he who is sent (apostolos)* greater than he who sent him' (13, 16). John never calls the Twelve apostles, and so the word is not used here as a title. But John has used it in its proper meaning in order to take the lesson of the foot-washing beyond the revolutionary idea of master and servant which it embodies to its theological implications.

For this purpose John has adapted a saying from the tradition, which was probably originally in the form in which it appears in Matthew 10, 24: 'A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master'. Since the work of Rengstorf on Apostleship it has been universally recognised that the unusual Greek word *apostolos* is a technical term, belonging to the sphere of agency, and denoting an accredited representative (Hebrew *shaliach*). Such a representative may indeed be a servant or slave, so that the connection between the two parts of John 13, 16 is by no means artificial. The classic example in the Bible is Abraham's slave, who negotiated the procuring of Rebekah as Isaac's wife (Genesis 24). When Jesus 'called his disciples, and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles' (Luke 6, 13), he was commissioning them for a specific task, to carry out his own vocation to announce the kingdom of God. Mark implies that this was confined to the Galilean mission, for he only uses the word apostles in this connection (Mark 6, 30).

John shows equal appreciation of the precise and limited meaning of the term, but he adds a further dimension. As he understands it, the apostolic office is not simply attached to the Twelve, as delegates of Jesus, but is applied to Jesus himself as the one sent by the Father. So he adds another saying from the tradition: 'Amen, amen, I say to you, he who receives me receives him who sent me' (John 13, 20, cf. Matthew 10, 40). Thus we have the principle of mission as a matter of delegation. God has entrusted his message to Jesus in the incarnation, and Jesus entrusts that same message to the disciples in their apostolic commission.

It now becomes clear why John has used the Last Supper as the setting for his teaching on apostleship. The Supper is the one occasion in his plan of the gospel when the disciples are represented as in intimate contact with Jesus, and a vignette is given of the life of the church which is to be. In the course of the teaching in this setting the conditions of the apostolic commission are made clear.

In the first place, the principle of mission is affirmed in chapter 14, where the relationship of God, Jesus and the disciples is presented as two overlapping unities: the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the disciples. This means that the disciples are admitted into the intimacy which exists between the Father and the Son: 'If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him' (14, 23). In John's view it

is precisely because Jesus lives in this loving union with the Father that he is capable of bearing, in fact of *being*, the Father's word. The setting of the Last Supper, with its close connection with the church's eucharistic assembly, makes it immediately obvious that the apostolic commission is derived from the communion of the Father and the Son through the communion of the Son and the disciples.

Secondly, the disciples will be empowered by the Holy Spirit. So the Supper Discourses include the passages on the sending of the Paraclete. John presents the idea of the Spirit in relation to mission in a way which runs parallel to the double idea of agency which we have already seen with regard to *apostolos*. Just as the Father sends the Son and the Son sends the apostles, so, at the request of Jesus, the Father sends the Spirit and the Spirit guides the apostles in their work. The Spirit is thus a kind of substitute for Jesus, and this is one reason John first refers to him as 'another Paraclete' (14, 16). So, by living in the communion with Jesus whereby they are brought into his own communion with the Father, the disciples are in a fit state to receive the Spirit as the vital force for carrying out their mission.

A third feature of the Supper Discourses is Jesus' warning that the mission will provoke hostility. This again fits the double agency pattern, because thereby they follow out the same experience of suffering as the Master who sends them. In making this point, John is indebted to the mission charge in the sayings tradition: 'When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you' (Matthew 10, 19f). John takes this as his starting point, but significantly he enlarges it beyond the setting of persecution to the whole missionary task: 'But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you' (John 14, 26).

This work of the Spirit, both in teaching the disciples and in reminding them of Jesus' words, is not a substitute for their own mental activity. John's argument presupposes mental activity, which will be directed by the Spirit, because it is undertaken within the spiritual unity already existing between the disciples and the Father through their communion with Jesus. For that is in itself a spiritual position which depends upon a proper mental attention for its maintenance. The principle of mission

is the fact of being sent by one greater than oneself, and this must be constantly acknowledged with love and gratitude.

* * *

The foot-washing appears at first sight as an exemplary act of service. Indeed that is how it is explained afterwards: 'If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet' (John 13, 14). This is no doubt how it was preserved in the tradition, whether we regard it as an actual historical occurrence, or as a dramatization of the saying preserved in Luke 22, 27: 'I am among you as one who serves'. But John has added into the tradition the strange feature of Peter's objection to being washed by Jesus, and this enables him to relate it to the *message* which the disciples are to give. For the little conversation between Peter and Jesus points up the necessity of being washed by Jesus, and that by a washing which is done once for all. We do not need to go into the question whether John is alluding to Christian baptism here. It is sufficient for our purpose that it directs attention to the cross. In so far as the foot-washing is related to the message of the apostles, it is an indication that the message is to be found in the cross.

The cross is absolutely central to the Fourth Gospel. We are so used to thinking of it as the gospel of the incarnation that we can easily fail to appreciate this. To John the crucifixion is the act which reveals the unity of the Father and the Son: 'When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority but speak thus as the Father taught me. And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him' (8, 28f). Seen in this light, the cross is the act of God as much as it is the act of wicked men. And yet at the same time it is Jesus' own act. Speaking of himself as the good shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep, he says, 'No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord' (10, 18). We know, of course, that strictly speaking that was not historically true. But in accepting crucifixion as the will of the Father, Jesus *made* it a voluntary act. In this sense it is the moment when he is 'glorified' by the Father (12, 23; 13, 31). John is dazzled by the paradox that Jesus' darkest moment is his hour of glory.

But the important thing for us is that this is the message which comes from God, and which the apostles are commissioned to preach: 'God

so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him (or, better, entrusts himself to him) should not perish but have eternal life' (3, 16). This is not merely a future hope. It is a present possession, and it is John's equivalent for the kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed. Unfortunately John does little to unpack this statement, so that it is difficult to see its full implications. The Good Shepherd allegory helps: 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand' (10, 27f). But we have to turn to Paul for a similar statement which can make it real for us today: 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8, 35—39).

* * *

Finally we turn our thoughts to the *method* by which this message can be communicated. This time we can take the foot-washing in its exemplary, rather than its theological, sense. It is indeed exceptionally important as an example of service, because it reverses the normal understanding of roles, and splendidly illustrates the radical reassessment of values which is fundamental to Jesus' preaching of the kingdom. John makes this point plain: 'I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you' (13, 15). Subsequently this is put into the form of a universal principle which the disciples are to observe: 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another' (13, 34). We notice again how well this fits the principle of mission with which we began. The apostles, as Christ's agents, convey his message by imitating his example. And this example is the expression of Christ's own apostleship, for it goes back to the fact that 'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son'.

At first sight the love command appears to be a matter of the internal life of the church. But the very next verse shows that it is in fact the method of communication of the gospel: 'By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (13, 35).

It is easy to sentimentalize these familiar words. But they are to be taken with the utmost seriousness. There is no method of communication which can be a substitute for this command. Whether we are thinking in terms of spearhead techniques to break new ground, or of special efforts to revitalise the parish, or of the constant witness of the congregation in its daily living, the love of the brethren is the fundamental factor for the credibility of the message which we have to offer. Hence it is necessary to think very carefully how to realise this command in practical terms in the church today, in organisational structures, in the conduct of worship, and in the fulfilment of pastoral obligations.

In John's teaching there is no distinction between the apostles and the church. He is not concerned with the nature of the sacred ministry within the church. The breathing of the Holy Spirit upon the assembled apostles in 20, 22f is not a matter of internal discipline, *i.e.* the penitential discipline of forgiving and retaining sins. Rather it is a matter of giving power for the church's mission to the world, *i.e.* convicting the world of sin if it withholds response, and proclaiming the gospel of forgiveness if it believes. The church as a whole shares in this apostolic commission.

Thus the church is the agent of Jesus, just as Jesus is the agent of the Father. It has a message to proclaim, which comes from God himself, the almost incredible message of the love of God, which indeed would be incredible altogether, if it did not find its centre and its authentication in the cross. And fundamental to all forms of communication of this message is the love of the brethren, which reflects, and indeed coheres in, the love of the Father and the Son. These things are unchanging, and cannot be swept away by the winds of theological change. They remain valid when our own resources fail. They provide the basis for thinking through our task afresh, and form the criteria by which all attempts at evangelism should be assessed.

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Calling

BY ROBIN MINNEY



VOCATION is the formal word for calling, and we link the word vocation to a definite step like that of joining one of our three orders. But there are, of course, varieties of vocation. During the few years that I had to deal with laymen aspirants to the Third Order, I began

by asking them, 'Why do you think you have a vocation to the Third Order?' But I found this was too strong and too formal a question, and therefore changed it to something like, 'What is it about the Franciscan life that attracts you?'

There are two good reasons for this change. One lies in the word *attract*. While a few are confident (falsely it sometimes turns out), most enquirers are simply interested or drawn. Obviously further information, then postulancy and novitiate, are each stages for feeling after and testing this particular kind of call. My other main reason was to stress the way as Franciscan. Many enquirers are attracted in the first instance by the idea of mutual support and a rule to provide some spiritual consistency, but do not realise that there are many other possibilities for community, order and self-discipline which are not specifically Franciscan. Thus there can be many callings, varying (to put it crudely) both in intensity and style. Many vocations are not Franciscan. But even among members of the S.S.F. Third Order one can see an enormous variety in expression and life-style, as well as in commitments to community, to neighbours and to family. While profession in the Order is life-long in intention, thus reflecting the vocation as something which endures, the actual vows are yearly, and the expression of one's vocation varies both as between individuals, and it can grow, develop and change over the years of the same member's life.

But we must remember that behind all this is the calling to be a Christian. I want to press this because to be a Christian logically precedes any vocation to profession, occupation, religious life, etc. Perhaps it is even more important that we should realise that to be a Christian *is* a vocation, and not purely and simply an accident of birth or a matter of personal choice. The Christian calling also means conversion, *i.e.* seeing life anew. Jesus did not accept the outlook of the scribes, however worthy in its own way, and his followers too get

into trouble because they call situations by new names. So the Christian disciple both receives a call, and he sees the world—his world—from a new point of view. In the gospels this involved looking at the world rather differently from the authorities.

Among the first Christians calling developed quickly. Thus while we have *one* calling and *one* baptism, we have great variety of gifts and ministrations within the body of Christ. Thus some are apostles, some teachers, healers, etc. What has happened is well known. The first followers of Jesus expected his quick return in glory and the passing of this world. As this hope faded, Christians had once more to work to live (and not just live off capital as in the days of Ananias and Sapphira) and even to organise relief for the needy. The end result is that Christians now have a special calling to a particular function within the Body of Christ, on top of their basic calling to be a Christian.

When a whole country or kingdom is felt to be Christian, and further that Christendom is coterminous with the Church, then the basic vocation is taken for granted, and tends to get forgotten. Vocation now means occupation, business or livelihood: we get 'trade, profession or vocation', and no doubt the very word *profession* would repay study in a Christian context. In our day the idea of Christendom as a political entity has passed, but the accompanying notion of vocation has not been fully revised, at least it has not been brought up to date by most of us. But what does seem to be happening now is a growing realisation that to live out a vocation means in fact to work under God with and for other people, and thus the needs of other people, that is our families, groups and communities, become a cardinal factor in the process of calling.

This, the community aspect, becomes clear as we consider the various types of calling which are usually classed as vocation. Most obvious are the ways in which enthusiastic converts to Christianity think they can embody their personal commitment, and these are types of ministry, mission and religious life. For some people it is just as simple as that, but for most missionaries, church workers and clergy the calling presents itself through some need felt in and on behalf of a group, neighbourhood or society. This is clear when we extend vocation to teaching or nursing, or to being on the P.C.C. In a way the community aspect of vocation applies to absolutely any kind of job, because if there is no need then the job will (sooner or later) disappear.

CALLING

A third type of calling involves a close relationship with particular people, such as a vocation to marriage or parenthood. Perhaps a lot of people do not experience such relationships as callings at all, let alone as particular aspects of the Christian calling, but I think it is both helpful and realistic to see them so. We could go on, to consider a vocation to be a good neighbour, or part of a political pressure group and so on. The possibilities are endless, and many of them are false, not real vocations at all, but excuses for being a busy-body. So there are times when I must say, 'No, I have *not* got a vocation to this involvement'. This might need investigation. It could well prove true.

The modes of vocation, or the ways in which the calling is perceived and seen to be in fact a calling, differ considerably. The supernaturalist pattern which most of us read into the Bible (Samuel's voice and so forth) may seem completely individualist: what can be more private than the dream or vision or inner voice? But in fact such a call is in connection with society in some form: even the most lonely of Israel's prophets was required to pray for his people. The reverse of this coin is exemplified by someone who sets out to meet a crying need, in someone or some group, and through this relationship and task gradually he or she comes to see it as also a calling from God. We may think that these are opposites, but the interplay of person and group is well illustrated in the mission field. Most rural and many urban people have a much deeper sense of community than we tend to know in industrial Britain or America, and yet among African Christians dreams and visions are frequently seen as modes of calling. Thus the individualised call and the community calling are not really at opposite ends of a spectrum.

What makes you believe a vision anyway, or what constitutes conviction? This is the heart of the question. Just as you cannot have a leader without followers, you cannot have God's calling without someone being called and knowing that he is being called. People recognise a calling in a variety of ways, and what really tells for you is almost certainly part of your background culture. In some societies (by no means only Christian) directive dreams are traditional, or at least may be expected to come if not to anyone, then to the leaders. Industrialised and democratised man may expect the Holy Spirit to work through committees—at any rate a lot of Christian committees pray for guidance before the Agenda, presumably in this expectation. For some, calls are an aspect of decisions which crystallise through prayer,

meditation or pastoral discussion, while for others God's voice is heard through an appointed officer, prophet, priest or king. There is no doubt that all these ways, and more, are valid. But what it amounts to is that certain patterns become accepted as normal or even proper and appropriate. Through your upbringing and the people you respect you are presented with these patterns, and both you and the community you live amongst recognise a vocation along such lines. It may be as simple as that, but more often there are specific needs which prompt such a calling. The 'conversion' type calling meets one's own need: a call to minister to the sick and aged is a community need which is specific to your current (or near future) situation. Problems arise of course when specific needs—your own or others'—change. I'll say something more about that later. Sometimes a call is explicit, and you find you've been elected to the P.C.C. or something, or A.C.C.M. tries to stifle your doubts by saying, 'Will you accept our decision as the will of God for you?'

This last is real in that it was actually said to me when, due to special circumstances and rather against my will, I went as a candidate to a selection conference. My answer was No, and I have not accepted their decision (to get me ordained) as God's will and calling. And this surely is the point of testing the spirits, to see whether they be of God. The touchstone is not always obvious, and I suggest that two qualities are required. One is sensitivity to needs, one's own as well as those of others, and the other quality is an openness to the riches of Christian tradition. God is often surprising, but he is not inconsistent. So what seem to be calls are not always genuine, or a vocation may not be for permanent, and so it is important to be able to say No in sincerity and truth.

Changing situations give rise to a call. But we need to recognise quite clearly too that the calling which comes to us changes us too in the process. Indeed, the idea of a Christian vocation which makes no change is absurd. But let us take a couple of examples in which the call comes from community needs. A daughter may feel called to look after an ageing parent, and to exercise a Christian ministry to others through this medium as her main focus. First one parent ails and passes, then the second. Many years have slipped by. She marries a widower older than herself, and nurses him too in his old age. She has given, and she has been changed in the process, but frequently, I fear, the Church does not fully credit this work for what it is and so fails to undergird

(and also deploy) this devotion into a wider ministry. My second example focusses on the non-stipendiary ministry. A particular group may call for a particular ministry, *e.g.* teaching, or a sacramental ministry to the housebound before you go to work. Changes in population structure can extinguish this need in the same neighbourhood just as decisively as if one were to move house. Consequently the Christian needs a lively sense of vocation, and one which is both patient and adaptable. Persistence and openness should both be present and they are by no means the same thing!

In the Far East changes in life are linked to stages in religious duties. I think that Western Christians can learn something from this. Conventionally in India there are four ashrams or levels of life. Thus the obligations and the opportunities of a young and single adult are different from those of the householder. Teenage children are a focus for changes in family life which it is unfortunately clear that a lot of parents simply refuse to recognise even in purely practical and economic terms, let alone in terms of religious duty, opportunity and vocation. The older couple—young grandparents perhaps—have a tremendous chance for deepening their spiritual life while still working and relating in the world, and even India's last ashram, that of the aged hermit who leaves all family and friends for meditation alone, could have something to say to us in the West. Meditation sounds more positive than our usual type of old folks' home, though this in itself might constitute the kind of cultural desert (which I'm afraid some of them are) appropriate for a spiritual approach to death. I do not wish to say that Christian vocation can be replaced by such a convention, but rather that we ought each one of us to consider the possibility of callings which to our present society seem unthinkable.

The word for calling someone contains in it a further and rather exciting clue. What are you called? Jesus calls his disciples and gives them new names. The Christian Church does exactly this in baptism, a point sometimes lost in believer's baptism when the name has been used long before. To avoid using our child's name until the christening is perhaps to ascribe too much magic to the sacrament, but the point, I think is made. New names are still given to young monks and nuns, and sometimes to kings at coronation (Prince Albert became George VI). This practice is older than Christianity, but the fact that we each have a Christian name serves to underline for each our Christian calling.

At the same time there is a mutuality. I hinted of this earlier. As we face the world in which we live we face it as Christians. We name the situations with which we have to do, and it is in our naming of them that they take their shape. Thus houses, schools, factories, neighbourhoods are either decent or distasteful because we call them so. Standards of living, poverty, cleanliness are quite notoriously relative, and civilised habits like blowing your nose into a handkerchief instead of the street strike an oriental as quite disgusting. In naming the world we help to create it, no less today than Adam naming the animals in Eden as God brought them to him. Nowadays we are brought to a situation rather than the other way round, or something is 'brought to our notice'. A relative of mine used the word 'bourgeois' with approval, meaning neat, clean, decently organised and not rough or peasant type. Such housewifely organising might appeal to any leftist, but of course under some other name. The point I am making is that if we call a situation unsatisfactory this implies that we must do something about it, and this in turn involves seeing what is wrong with it and why. This is the mutuality in calling. We name the world as we see it and as it is for us and what we must do about it, and through this which is our specific calling, comes the calling of Jesus in and through our normal circumstances. And this applies surely as much to a call to prayer, meditation and devotion, as any urgency for practical and social change. Basic to all is the vocation of God which is in Christ.

A call to the ministry, or to the religious life, must be seen in this context. There are varieties of vocation, just as there are varieties of gifts, and it is possible to have a vocation to an order, or a mode of life, to an occupation, to a special ministry and relationship to other people, all within the basic calling to be a Christian.

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‘Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die . . . ’

FIFTY-SIX years ago a ‘corn of wheat’ was planted in a small village in Western India, when Father Jack Winslow and six young Indians began their life together in a spiritual family under a very simple Rule. After eight years in India Jack had a problem. He had felt unable to continue work in a conventional missionary set-up. He deplored the British attitude of racial superiority, found even among missionaries. He was deeply concerned because western ways of worship, and social customs were imposed upon converts, and the Indian spiritual tradition was either ignored or condemned. The answer had come in a vision of a Christian fellowship modelled on the Ashrams of ancient India in which Europeans and Indians could live together in Indian style, in simplicity and on a basis of complete equality, holding all things in common, and studying to present the Gospel in a way which India would understand.

On 11 June, 1922, at Miri, a village near Ahmednagar, Bishop Palmer of Bombay inaugurated Christa Seva Sangha (the Society of the Servants of Christ) also known as the Fellowship of S. Barnabas as the Church there was dedicated to this Saint. Yet there was something attractively Franciscan about the Sangha in their poverty, devotion, and evangelistic zeal. They lived alongside the ‘outcaste’ villagers, sharing their life, identifying themselves with the ‘poorest of the poor’ ministering to the sick and needy, accompanying their Christian teaching with joyful song and drama. They lived very simply on Jack’s salary, their vegetarian food costing about 6d. a day. They wore Indian clothes, went barefoot, slept and sat on the floor. Their brotherly love and spontaneity remind us of the little group at Rivo Torto, and the Portiuncula. But no-one else joined them! Two left and Jack went on furlough in 1926 with a heavy heart, thinking that it must all come to an end. ‘However’, he said, ‘God had other things in store’.

The Church Times printed an article on C.S.S., and this had attracted a group of young men gathered round that remarkable person, Father Algy Robertson. 1926 was the seventh centenary of the death of S. Francis, and this may have increased a desire in our Church for Franciscan ideals. Algy and some of his group felt called to the Franciscan life. They met Jack at Swanwick and as a result Algy and five others decided to join the Sangha. Jack received a generous gift, which enabled him to buy land and build a permanent Ashram in Poona, where the Sangha was moving at Bishop Palmer’s request.

So the Sangha began a new lease of life. By 1927 the Brethren, Indian and European, were camping in tents, building their Ashram and their Community life. The Rule was revised and it was then that S. Francis became their second Patron Saint. Under Algy’s influence the Sangha became more Franciscan with the unmarried and married separated into ‘celibates’ and ‘householders’, and later into First and Third Orders. Jack, supported by Verrier Elwin, resisted. Both felt that it might prevent Indians from joining as most intended to marry.

It was decided therefore that the original members, now married, should remain full members of the Sangha, and vote in the Chapter. Soon there were applications

from people in Africa, England and other parts of India for membership of the Third Order, and a Rule was drawn up for them in accordance with the aims and ideals of the Sangha.

In 1930 Algy was invalided home. He became Vicar of St. Ives, Huntingdonshire, in 1931, and started an English Branch of C.S.S. in his Vicarage. Here Postulants had a period of training and testing before joining the Sangha in India. The house provided a base for those on furlough, and many guests stayed there both Indian and English. Algy already belonged to the 'Fellowship of the Way', a Franciscan Tertiary Movement which also included four Religious Communities, one of which was C.S.S. Carol Graham, a Tertiary of C.S.S. in India, received permission to send a copy of their Rule to Dorothy Swayne who had written for guidance. She and her friends met Jack and Algy, and as a result, under Algy's direction, they were admitted as Tertiaries at St. Ives, and were given the C.S.S. Rule. Algy and Dorothy planned the first Third Order Manual together, which was later published. In 1933 the First Order Members of the Fellowship came into closer union, calling themselves the Society of S. Francis. The C.S.S. Tertiaries in England became members of the S.S.F. Third Order, their Rule being that of C.S.S., adapted to English conditions. In 1934 Jack resigned from the Sangha which was then divided. The group remaining in Poona, Christa Prema Seva Sangha, continued as a Franciscan Community under the leadership of Father Bill Lash. The St. Ives' Brotherhood maintained as close an association as possible with C.P.S.S., taking the name of the Brotherhood of the Love of Christ, 'love' being the English translation of 'prema'. A concordat was implemented which allowed transfer of members of both First and Third Orders, but left the two Societies distinct. In 1936 B.L.C. adopted the Franciscan habit, and came under the united Rule of S.S.F., which was based on the Principles of C.S.S., and C.P.S.S. The following year Algy resigned from his parish and moved to Cerne Abbas with the remaining Brothers.

'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die . . .'. This passage from John 12—24, 25, has always been the introduction to the Rules of C.S.S., and C.P.S.S., and is still to be found in the present Third Order Manual. And how true this has been ! The grain that was C.S.S. fell into the ground and died, bearing fruit in its important share in shaping the history of S.S.F. And not only that ! Eight years ago the Ashram in Poona was re-opened as an ecumenical Community, following in many respects the aims and ideals of Jack Winslow, and although the Community is not Franciscan, S. Francis remains the Patron Saint. May they continue to live in his spirit of poverty and devotion !

SISTER BARBARA NOREEN C.S.M.V.

What man, after all, can pass judgment on another man? Everyone is filled with rash judgments. Yet the man we despaired of is suddenly converted and becomes the best of men. The man from whom we expected much suddenly fails and becomes the worst of men. Neither our fears nor our loves are certain.

Saint Augustine 'On Shepherds' (Sermon 46)

Books

Vulnerability

Rediscovering Pastoral Care. *By Alastair V. Campbell.*

D.L.T., 1981, xii + 124 pp., £3.95.

It is incomparably more important for the Christian with a caring responsibility for others, or for one who finds that others turn to him or her in their times of grief or difficulty, to be sensitively aware of what is happening, than to know what to do.

This is a book to set beside, not to displace, those directly concerned with the practice of counselling and various schools and techniques. It is a reminder, and a timely one, that the inward reality of the counselling process is best portrayed not by the Freudian or Jungian models or those of their latter day disciples, but by biblical images.

The author employs those of the shepherd (understood in its scriptural fullness rather than with superficial sentimentality), the wounded healer, and the fool. If the book has a central concept, it must be that of vulnerability—something to set against that of the invulnerable, white-coated

professional. The shepherd, the healer, the fool—all vulnerable in their exposure to those in need of love, vulnerable, too, in their own need.

It is on the reality behind these images that all Christian caring work, however sophisticated, has to be founded if it is to mediate the healing power of Christ. In the words of E. Shillito, quoted on p. 38—

The other Gods were strong but
Thou wast weak;
They rode, but Thou didst stagger
to a throne.
But to our wounds only God's
wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds but
Thou alone.

And so—the flock comes home, the wounds find healing, and the fool through tears brings us to laughter.

ANSELM S.S.F.,
Minister Provincial.

Loving and Thinking

The Kingdom of Love and Knowledge: the Encounter Between Orthodoxy and the West.

By A. M. Allchin. Darton, Longman and Todd, 214 pp., £3.95.

At the end of his letter to the Carthusian community of Mont Dieu known as the *Golden Epistle*, the twelfth-century Cistercian abbot, William of S. Thierry, speaks of the final stage of the spiritual life as being one in which, by the work of the Holy Spirit, 'the understanding of the thinker becomes the contemplation of the lover'. The 'sharp sight of the thinker becomes the bliss of the one who enjoys'. This intimate relationship between the intellectual quest of the theologian and the interior

realisation of the love of God in prayer is not one which has always been maintained. In Western Christendom particularly there has been a sundering of theology and spirituality, which has at times resulted in a sentimental, private and unsubstantial piety contrasted with an arid and pedantic intellectualism. By comparison the Orthodox tradition has endeavoured to maintain this relationship, and it is with this as it impinges on Western Christianity that Canon Allchin's new collec-

tion of essays is primarily concerned.

Two of the four sections of this book consist of studies of individuals. This is no accident, for this theology is primarily incarnational theology, not theology as a detached academic specialism. We are introduced to the great Byzantine mystic, Symeon the New Theologian; to the eighteenth-century Welsh farmer's daughter, Ann Griffiths, whose hymns reflect an extraordinary depth of Trinitarian spirituality; to the Danish hymn-writer, N. F. S. Grundtvig; as well as to aspects of the thought of more familiar figures, F. D. Maurice, Evelyn Underhill, and Vladimir Lossky. What we are invited to see is a common awareness in these diverse figures, from different ages and different Christian traditions, of God as Trinity, a living God who makes himself known in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the creator alike of the prayer of the heart and the sacramental mystery. This shared theological perspective issues in a piety which is personal without being individualistic, and liturgical without being formal. It witnesses to that 'balance of tradition' which Canon Allchin explores in four other essays.

These are particularly concerned with aspects of Anglicanism—its comprehensiveness; its liturgical definition; its concern with apostolic order; and its Trinitarian and incarnational emphasis. These are valuable pointers to the nature of Anglican identity, of which we need a much more profound awareness if we are to be genuinely ecumenical. The two essays which stand as an introduction to the whole collection are a reminder that this same tradition has a richer and profounder understanding of God than it is often given the credit for possessing. What is attacked under the guise of the traditional picture of God, is rather a product, as David Jenkins has reminded us, of 'the pathology of Western Christianity'. We neglect the living tradition at our peril; we sunder theology and prayer and invite disaster.

The Kingdom of Love and Knowledge is a recall to a theology of Christian experience. The essays are significant signposts, and it is to be hoped that Canon Allchin will before long give us a fuller map of the main highway in which he would rightly have us walk.

GEOFFREY ROWELL.

Ulster

Profiles of Hope. *By Alf McCreary.*

Christian Journals Ltd., Belfast BT9 6TH, 1981, 89 pp.

This book is essential reading for all who wish to look below and beyond the surface of Northern Ireland's troubles. The author is a distinguished journalist, author and broadcaster whose work spans the period since 1969.

He contributes a prologue and epilogue to *Profiles of Hope*. The rest of the book is grounded in individual personal experience. Four women who lost their closest kin, husband or sons, describe how they overcame bitterness

and poured their grief and loss into new and constructive ways of living. It is difficult not to be deeply moved. Next a detective of the Royal Ulster Constabulary tells of his attitude to his work amidst violence, terror and crime and of his sources of inspiration. 'I believe', he says, 'that the human spirit with God's help can overcome the violence and the tragedies'.

This is the message of the book, a message powerfully reinforced by

accounts of movements in Southern Ireland, America and Holland to help Northern Ireland in its hour of need. Finally in a chapter headed Searching for Peace, the founder of the

Corrymeela Community speaks of one of Northern Ireland's most striking attempts at self-healing. The price of peace, he says, is a removal of fear.

RAYMOND HYLTON.

Man and God

The Fire and the Rose are One. *By Sebastian Moore.*

Darton, Longman and Todd, £4.95.

This book represents a sort of flowering of this well known author's existential Christology. He examines the fundamentals of what it is to be a human being, the deep motivations of life. He arrives at some startling conclusions about self-hood, guilt, sin and the need for significance.

Jesus was the man without sin, without self-disesteem, enjoying recognition and significance from the depth of his being. He awakened in his disciples an understanding of the origin and purpose of existence that transformed the world for them into the Kingdom of God.

The catastrophic effect of the arrest and execution of Jesus, seen by the disciples as truly the death of God, and the triumph of sin, could only be changed by the return of Jesus in a totally new experience of the immediacy and intimacy of God. From this standpoint the Nicean Council formulations on Jesus as God and the Trinity are examined.

The theme of this book is handled with the skill of a poet, tightly packed and allowing free reign to the imagination. Wrestle with it and enjoy it.

VICTOR S.S.F.

Reunion

Peter and the Single Church. *By John de Satgé.* S.P.C.K., £4.95.

Never do I feel more sure of belonging at the very centre of the Anglican Via Media than when extremists on both sides of me unite, whether it is in over-excitement about women priests or, here, in what seems to me over-enthusiasm for the Petrine claims of Rome. John de Satgé comes from an evangelical background, is involved in the ecumenical dialogue and writes surprising books: I wonder how other evangelicals react to them. This one has much that is good and draws usefully on modern scholarship, but leaves me asking whether his efforts to be understanding of the Roman point of view

have led him to ignore some of the evidence. For instance he remarks on the fact that 'The Corinthians wrote to Rome for advice'. I seem to have read of early bishops writing to other patriarchs or even to each other for advice. But he *was* 'working through the selection of texts most used by controversialists for or against the papacy', so perhaps this explains his bias. It is difficult not to read back later claims into the early history but surely a more determined effort of imagination than this is called for. As for the present, the story of Schillebeeckx and Kung does

not make everyone as optimistic as this writer about the *practice* of 'the principle of legitimate diversity within the Catholic Church' since Vatican II. He hopes for corporate reunion with Rome, but says that 'no one who

accepts the arguments of this book will easily face the prospect of indefinite exclusion from full communion'. If these are the only terms on offer, he would be ill advised to wait for me.

A SISTER C.S.Cl.

Prayer

Encountering the Depths. *By Mother Mary Clare, S.L.G.*

(foreword by Michael Ramsay). D.L.T., £1.99.

This is a difficult book to review because it is so good. I am tempted to write but one sentence—'Buy it and read it because it will make you want to pray'.

Mother Mary Clare is writing from a lifetime of experience in seeking God and the 81 pages of this book are close-packed with wisdom. Her happy turns of phrase are often memorable and spark off prayer. Because she shows prayer to be a throwing away of ourselves to take

part in the redemptive action of Christ, what she says is for the most part as applicable to the busy Christian whose prayer is a matter of brief moments as to the contemplative nun.

I will confine myself with difficulty to but two quotations—the opening words of the book, 'Prayer is the gateway to the vision of God for which we were created' and the words with which it ends, 'It is all his work'.

A SISTER C.S.Cl.

Books Received

The Reviews Editor gratefully acknowledges receipt of the following publications:

The Play of Wisdom, by a Sister of Malling Abbey, Mowbrays; **Treasures from the Spiritual Classics: The Imitation of Christ**, by Thomas a Kempis (2) and **The Life and Letters of Father Andrew S.D.C.** (5), Mowbrays; **An Approach to Christianity**, by Bishop Christopher Butler, Fount; **Freedom of Simplicity**, by Richard Foster, Triangle; **The Life in Animals and Plants**, by Emanuel Swedenborg, Swedenborg Society; **A Camel in the Needle's Eye**, by Benoit Charlemagne, S.C.M.; **The Greatest Gift in the World**, by Augustus Mandino, Sheldon; **Marriage, Faith and Love**, by Jack Dominian, D.L.T.; **Peter and the Single Church**, by John de Satge, S.P.C.K.; **The Dynamic of Tradition**, by A. M. Allchin, D.L.T.; **The Life of Edmund Morgan**, by Canon and Mrs. A. J. Beach, Privately; **Tight Corners in Pastoral Counselling**, by Frank Lake, D.L.T.; **Parables for Now—and—More Parables for Now**, by Edmund Flood, D.L.T.; **The Garden of the Beloved**, by Robert Way, S.P.C.K.



A MISSION TEAM IN NORTHAMPTON

Dianne, Graham, Donald, Eleanor Bridget, Valerie Maley (Third Order),
Albert and the parish priest, the Revd. B. Walshe.

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